Commentary

Volume Seventy-seven, Number Four, April 1984

Jesse Jackson, the Blacks & American Foreign Policy

Arch Puddington

Marxism vs. the Jews

Paul Johnson

Vietnam: The Revised Standard Version

Norman Podhoretz

The Phenomenal Life of Sir Moses Montefiore

Chaim Raphael

In Defense of Public Diplomacy

Carnes Lord

Sex and Euphemism

Joseph Epstein

The World's Favorite Movie Star

Richard Grenier

BOOKS:

Ruth R. Wisse
Steven C. Munson
Jean Frumkin
Nelson W. Polsby
Roger Kaplan

PUBLISHED BY THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE / $3.00

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Consumer Orientation
No. 27 in a series
Subject: The Porsche philosophy of reliability on the track and in their street cars.

27 Porsche 944

At Porsche, we have always built unusually successful sports cars. Through a high investment in technical excellence, these automobiles have brought home countless racing victories.

Yet, our main objective has never been absolute speed. Performance is not achieved at the expense of safety, reliability, and endurance. This philosophy applies to every automobile we build. Before any prototype goes into production, it is put through a rigorous series of tests at our research facility near Stuttgart, Germany. Here, under demanding conditions, the proper balance in terms of fuel economy,* performance, and driving safety is attained.

The Porsche 944 represents our latest achievement. Like all its predecessors, it incorporates the knowledge gained from testing and race-honed experience into its design. You see, at Porsche, excellence is expected. The Porsche 944 is priced at $21,440.** For your nearest Porsche Audi dealer call toll free 1-800-447-4700 within the continental U.S.

PORSCHE + AUDI
NOTHING EVEN COMES CLOSE

*EPA estimated 22 mpg, 35 estimated highway. Use "estimated mpg" for comparison. Mileage varies with speed, trip length and weather.
**Mfr's sugg. retail price. Title, taxes, transp., registration and dealer delivery charges additional.

© 1984 Porsche Audi

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Commentary

VOLUME 77 NUMBER FOUR *APRIL 1984*

Articles

19 Jesse Jackson, the Blacks & American Foreign Policy *Arch Puddington*

28 Marxism vs. the Jews *Paul Johnson*

35 Vietnam: The Revised Standard Version *Norman Podhoretz*

42 In Defense of Public Diplomacy *Carnes Lord*

Observations

51 The Phenomenal Life of Sir Moses Montefiore *Chaim Raphael*

55 Sex and Euphemism *Joseph Epstein*

Movies

61 The World's Favorite Movie Star *Richard Grenier*

Letters

2 from *James Q. Wilson, Hal J. Breen, Lore Reich Rubin, Haven Bradford Gow, Ernest van den Haag, Christopher Layne, Eugen Loebl, Christopher C. Faille, Michael Levin, Frederic R. Kellogg, Josiah Lee Auspitz, Irene Neumann Brown, Marion Hunt, Harold B. Somer, Paul G. Kuntz, William R. Havender, Manfred R. Lehmann, Donald M. Blinken, Joel J. Sprayregen, Alan Cooper,* and others

Books in Review

68 In the Land of Israel, by Amos Oz *Ruth R. Wisse*

71 The Alliance, by Richard J. Barnet *Steven C. Munson*

74 Tracking the Marvelous, by John Bernard Myers *Jean Frumkin*

77 America's Hidden Success, by John E. Schwarz *Nelson W. Polsby*

79 The Plot to Kill the Pope, by Paul Henze; The Time of the Assassins, by Claire Sterling *Roger Kaplan*

Editor: Norman Podhoretz

Executive Editor: Neal Kozodoy

Managing Editor: Marion Magid

Associate Editor: Brenda Brown

Contributing Editors: Robert Alter, Milton Himmelfarb, Walter Laqueur

Comptroller: Philip Shamis

Production Manager: Bruce Lodi

Circulation Manager: Helene Hansen

Cover: The Drawing Board, Inc.

COMMENTARY (ISSN 0010-2601) is published monthly by the American Jewish Committee—Single copy is $3.00, $30 a year; 3 years $81; 5 years $120—Add $5.00 per year for all foreign, including Canada and Latin America—Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y. and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to COMMENTARY, 165 East 56th St., New York, N.Y. 10022.

Copyright © 1984 by the American Jewish Committee; all rights reserved under International and Pan American Copyright Conventions—Indexed in *Readers' Guide, Book Review Digest, Public Affairs Information Service, Index to Jewish Periodicals, ABC Pol Sci, Historical Abstracts,* and *America: History and Life*—Unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed return envelope.

EDITORIAL & BUSINESS OFFICES: 165 E. 56th St., New York, N.Y. 10022

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Statement of Aims

In sponsoring COMMENTARY, the American Jewish Committee aims to meet the need for a journal of significant thought and opinion on Jewish affairs and contemporary issues. The opinions and views expressed by COMMENTARY's contributors and editors are their own, and do not necessarily express the Committee's viewpoint or position. The sponsorship of COMMENTARY by the Committee is in line with its general program to enlighten and clarify public opinion on problems of Jewish concern, to fight bigotry and protect human rights, and to promote Jewish cultural interest and creative achievement in America.

AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

Howard I. Friedman, *President*

The Commentary Publication Committee

Frederick P. Rose, *Chairman*

Morris B. Abram
Norman E. Alexander
Donald M. Blinken
Theodore Ellenoff
Edward E. Elson
Richard C. Ernst
Lawrence Goldmuntz
Mark Goodson
Robert H. Haines
Lewis J. Laventhol
Bess Myerson
Robert L. Pelz
Ned Pines
Richard Schifter
Nanette Scofield
Henry Sherman
John Slawson
Alan M. Stroock*
Laurence A. Tisch

**Honorary Member*

Letters from Readers

Preventing Crime

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his generally favorable article ["Thinking About Crime Again," December 1983] on the new edition of my book, *Thinking About Crime*, Ernest van den Haag renews our longstanding quarrel about the relative merits of deterrence and incapacitation as crime-reduction strategies. We both agree that the courts have not served crime-control objectives as well as they might, that offenders are sufficiently rational to be influenced by the costs of their behavior, and that it is very hard to increase arrest rates in order to make those costs more certain.

We disagree over whether society should respond to this state of affairs by making sentences generally more severe so as to deter more would-be offenders or by making them selectively more severe for high-rate offenders (because there are great social benefits to society from incapacitating them) and somewhat less severe for low-rate offenders (because there are only modest benefits from incapacitating them).

I object to making, as Mr. van den Haag suggests, criminal sentences very severe for all second-time offenders for several reasons. First, the courts cannot be induced to do this; laws that try to force them to act in this way will be evaded (I give examples of this in my book). Second, this policy would require an enormous expansion in prison space. Mr. van den Haag proposes to deal with this in two ways: by shortening the prison terms of persons over the age of thirty-five to make room for the new arrivals and by hoping that very severe sentences will so deter would-be offenders as to reduce crime dramatically and thus reduce sharply the demand for prison space. Unfortunately, the first answer is irrelevant: there are not enough prisoners over the age of thirty-five to create much space even if they were all released tomorrow (in 1974, only 24 percent of all inmates were thirty-five and over) and many of those who are over thirty-five have committed such heinous offenses that reducing the sentences by very much would be unjust (of the roughly 45,000 inmates over the age of thirty-five in 1974, over one-fourth were murderers or rapists). And the second answer is wholly speculative. We do not have credible evidence that *feasible* changes in the severity of sentences will affect the crime rate, though we do have some credible evidence that changing the certainty of sentences will have an effect.

Mr. van den Haag claims that comparable changes in the certainty and severity of a penalty will have comparable effects on criminal behavior, but the evidence is otherwise. A large number of offenders are so impulsive (that is, they discount the future so heavily) that very small changes in certainty will have a greater effect on their behavior than very large changes in severity, especially if the severe sentence is long delayed. (And the more severe the sentence, the greater the likely delay in its imposition.) Richard J. Herrnstein and I are finishing a book which makes this argument clear; I hope Mr. van den Haag not only reviews it, but is persuaded by it.

His argument against selective incapacitation is twofold: that it will weaken the deterrent effect of the law by lowering the severity of the penalty for low-rate offenders and that it will not reduce the crime committed by high-rate offenders because every such criminal sent off to prison will be replaced on the street by a new recruit. But if certainty of punishment affects behavior more than severity, then punishing low-rate offenders even at lower levels of severity than is now the case will continue to deter some would-be offenders. Moreover, Mr. van den Haag's policy of imposing very heavy penalties on all second offenders would probably, *if* judges could be persuaded to adopt it, lead to much longer delays in punishment (more offenders would exhaust their opportunities for appeal) and the early release from prison, not of old murderers but of young burglars, thereby weakening whatever deterrent effect the law now has.

The view that incapacitation cannot work because all offenders will be replaced on the street is true only under certain circumstances. If the crime is committed by a gang, then sending one member to prison would have little or no effect on the gang's crime rate. If the crime has the property of a market transaction (as does much of the narcotics,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

gambling, and prostitution businesses), then removing one supplier creates an incentive for a new supplier to be recruited or removes the barriers facing prospective suppliers eager to cash in. But most crime does not occur in a market. The number of burglars we have may be influenced by the net benefits (loot minus effort and punishment) of burglary, but these net benefits are not affected by how many burglars there are on the street. At present crime levels, there are no persons wishing to be burglars who are unable to find an "opening"—that is, a home containing loot—or who are prevented by a United Burglars Union from going to work or who have discovered that the market for stolen goods has collapsed. The recruitment of new burglars can be increased by making burglary more attractive or by changing the degree to which conscience and the fear of risks prevent most of us from trying our hand at burglary, but it will not be increased by sending convicted burglars to prison.

Finally, let me note that though Mr. van den Haag thinks there is a choice to be made between selective incapacitation (which is nothing but a fancy term for allocating scarce prison space more rationally) and deterrence, in fact there is no real choice at all except when one proposes extreme changes in sentencing policies. When criminals are sent to prison, both deterrence and incapacitation are simultaneously being achieved to some degree. Basing prison terms (within limits) on a more careful estimate of the rate at which persons would commit crimes if free does not weaken deterrence and it may enhance incapacitation, and if the limits are set properly, it will serve justice as well, which ought to be our highest goal.

JAMES Q. WILSON
Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . In "Thinking About Crime Again," Ernest van den Haag first states that "theories of crime causation do not help much" and then, in the same paragraph, propounds the untenable "explanation" that the black crime rate is higher than the white crime rate because there is a higher proportion of young black males in the population. He does concede that there are other factors, but ignores what everyone knows: that crime is more prevalent in black populations even when corrected for this variable, and that this is a consequence of a greater degree of social disorder in the black population. What he says is true, in the same sense that unemployment results when people are out of work.

More importantly, however, he goes on to assert that the policy consequences of correct causal theories are quite limited, and that "*therefore*, knowing about crime control is more important than knowing about crime causation" (emphasis added). This would be acceptable if his premise were not false. Presumably, Mr. van den Haag is concerned with the prevention of crime, and I submit that it is the evolution of conscience, not the indirect consequence of punishment from external sources, which is the principal deterrent to crime. It is not true that nothing is known about this, or that the policy consequences are "quite limited." For example, it has been known for at least some years that taking children away from their mothers before the age of three or so predisposes them to antisocial behavior in later life. In spite of this, social agencies involved with hundreds of thousands of infants persist in shifting many thousands of these infants through as many as four or five foster homes before they are four years old, frequently for trivial reasons. This, of course, is only a small factor in the deterioration in social order which is a worldwide process. Does it follow that the consequences are "quite limited"?

After disavowing concern for the causes of crime, Mr. van den Haag proposes what is after all a psychological theory of the cause of crime: "Expected comparative net advantage." In the history of theories, this has to be one of the least tenable I have ever encountered. . . . Mr. van den Haag says "unlawful occupations do not differ from lawful ones, except that some of the latter, such as dentistry, require

RW017CE

"In the great Regent tradition. The Mayfair Regents, The Regent, Hong Kong and now The Regent of Washington, D.C."

From Spring '84, there is a home for the impossible perfectionist in Washington, D.C. Understated elegance echoes the subdued tones of The Mayfair Regent of New York. Absolute comfort reflects the spacious luxury of The Mayfair Regent of Chicago.
And those who have wished for a similar experience in the nation's capital need wait no longer.

the Regent WASHINGTON, D.C.
A REGENT INTERNATIONAL HOTEL

2350 M Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037
HONG KONG BANGKOK KUALA LUMPUR MANILA FIJI COLOMBO SYDNEY MELBOURNE HAWAII PUERTO RICO ALBUQUERQUE NEW YORK CHICAGO WASHINGTON
U.S.A. TOLL FREE 800-545-4000; WASHINGTON D.C. 202-429-0100, TELEX 904282 OR YOUR TRAVEL AGENT.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

training and a license, whereas burglary does not. It is easier to become a burglar." Still, it is difficult to believe that Mr. van den Haag, even if he were severely punished for writing nonsense, and recognizing as he does that crime pays, would be likely to become a burglar.

His ideas about punishment fly in the face of common observation of criminals and of history. Very few criminals concede an even remote degree of probability of being caught, even when this is almost certain, so they assume that "punishment," however severe, will never be imposed on them. It is a fact that in 18th-century England when more than 100 petty crimes (like stealing a loaf of bread) were punishable by death, petty crimes flourished.

Mr. van den Haag's reasonably feasible solution, the abolition of the juvenile court system, with "severe punishment" meted out to those as young as thirteen, has been anticipated, I believe, by the thought-provoking and nonsentimental firmness of the Iranians, who are reported to have executed children of this age—for serious crimes, of course. . . .

HAL J. BREEN

Phoenix, Arizona

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Ernest van den Haag . . . prefers to forget about the causes of crime and to demand strict enforcement of the law. But why isn't it possible to tighten law enforcement, and hence help deter future criminals, while at the same time paying serious attention to what might be causing so much crime? Mr. van den Haag himself identifies a certain age group of young males as the chief perpetrators of violent crime, and we might ask why this particular group is so active. Many students of the subject believe that crime rates are rising in part because young males seek to show how "macho" they are, but modern urban society offers them few outlets to take risks and face challenges. . . . Would it not be much cheaper for society to provide such outlets in a noncriminal direction than to put young men in jail for a year? Recently much publicity has been given to some young people in New York who, instead of indulging in gang fights, have developed the highly athletic "break dancing," an activity sufficiently difficult to satisfy "macho-demonstration" needs.

Tragically, our youth has been deprived of even simple outlets like school sports because of the dominance of the money-making "big-team" concept. If you don't *make* the football or basketball team in your freshman year of high school, your athletic career is over. . . . Those who take part in intramural athletics are considered second-class citizens. Programs which have challenged tough youth in this country, like Outward Bound which confronts youth with severe risks in nature, or the CCC which confronts youth with the challenge of developing physical strength and endurance, have been highly successful. Whether we offer difficult contact sports for all, or organized programs in which one battles nature, we must be prepared to pay the cost. Nevertheless, such programs are much cheaper, and much more productive, than building and running prisons.

Obviously there are many other causes for crime than the need for "macho-demonstration." I bring up this particular subject because Mr. van den Haag points the finger at young persons and because it is an example of the type of thinking that might lead to solutions which can go hand in hand with intensified law enforcement.

LORE REICH RUBIN

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Ernest van den Haag observes that "Many hitherto influential criminologists have been less interested in controlling crime than in justifying social reforms by way of theories, usually unsubstantiated, about crime causation. They insist that social injustice is to blame for crime, not criminals."

The tragic consequences of this sadly mistaken view of crime and criminals are everywhere to be found. According to FBI crime statistics, in 1980 there was a violent crime every 24 seconds, including a murder every 23 minutes, a forcible rape every 6 minutes, a robbery every 58 seconds, and an aggravated assault every 48 seconds. And just as alarming is that many of these crimes were committed by "repeat offenders": criminals who received inordinately lenient treatment, who should have been forced to make restitution and remain in prison longer, who started raping, drug-pushing, assaulting, stealing, and home-invading once they got out of prison.

Clearly, a major reason this society has been unable to alleviate the glaring problem of crime is that too many criminologists, judges, and law-enforcement officials have been unduly influenced by the naive and pernicious assumption that man is born good but becomes corrupted by evil social institutions and a bad environment. According to proponents of this view, society —not the criminal—is morally responsible for crime. . . .

The questions that really should concern us are these: what happens to the tragic victims of crime? And what about the families of these victims?

Certainly, if we want to alleviate the pervasive and persistent problem of crime, we need a realistic and tough-minded view of human nature, criminals, and crime. Then perhaps we can develop and implement some equally realistic and tough-minded approaches to deal with the problem.

HAVEN BRADFORD GOW

Arlington Heights, Illinois

ERNEST VAN DEN HAAG writes:

"Punishing low-rate offenders even at lower levels of severity than is now the case," James Q. Wilson writes, "will continue to deter some would-be offenders." It will. But it will deter *fewer* would-be offenders; whereas *more* must be deterred. Even with current exorbitant (and reducible) prison costs, punishing young low-rate second offenders more severely would cost less than encouraging their criminal careers by reducing their sentences, as Mr. Wilson proposes.

Mr. Wilson reasserts the conventional belief that certainty of punishment is more of a deterrent than severity. But he offers no new argument. As I pointed out, his original arguments and statistics are unconvincing. However, I shall be open to persuasion by his new book. (Even if unpersuaded, I expect to profit, as I always have, from reading him and Richard J. Herrnstein; the combination should be synergistic.) We must also wait for the new book to learn how to increase the certainty of punishment since, as Mr. Wilson writes, "it is very hard to increase arrest rates."

He also says that "the net benefits [of burglary] are not affected by how many burglars are on the street" since would-be burglars can freely enter the profession and will not find that the "market for stolen goods has collapsed" as a result of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

their entry. If he means that there is no lack of opportunity to become a burglar and that there always is a market for stolen goods, he is right. The theory I offered does not suggest anything to the contrary.

Nonetheless, the net benefit from burglary is affected by the number of practicing burglars; and, in turn, it affects the number of new entrants. The net benefit for new entrants in any occupation, legitimate or illegitimate, is affected by the number already practicing, so that, if that number is reduced through additional incapacitation (as Mr. Wilson proposes), the net benefit for new entrants increases, *ceteris paribus*, and, therefore, additional new entrants are attracted. They will take the place of those incapacitated (though not in the literal sense Mr. Wilson had in mind), until the number practicing (and the net benefit) returns to its equilibrium level. To deny this is to assume that burglars are born, not made, or to leave the rate of burglary a mystery. Mr. Wilson admits that the net benefit from burglary is affected by the cost to the burglar, which is largely the risk of punishment. It is hard to see, then, why Mr. Wilson implies that the net benefit (and the number of burglars) is not affected by the price of the proceeds, which in turn must be affected by the supply thereof. A (comparative) shortage, produced by the additional incapacitation of high-rate burglars of stolen cars, jewelry, TV sets, or typewriters, increases the net benefit and attracts new burglars and thieves. (Note that burglary and car theft constitute two-thirds of all felonies.) I must reaffirm my conclusion then: incapacitation of high-rate offenders engaged in market-dependent crimes such as burglary or car theft is futile; it is not likely ultimately to have any effect on crime rates; reducing the punishment of low-rate offenders is likely to increase crime rates by reducing deterrence.

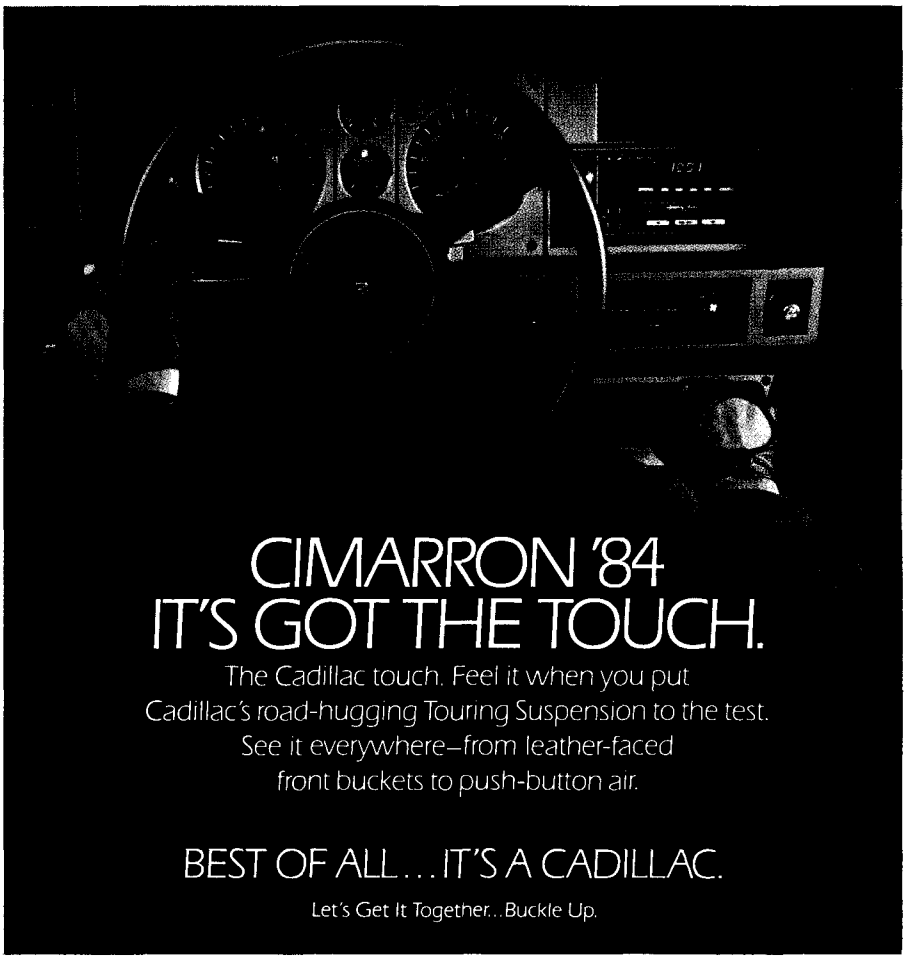
Imprisonment, as Mr. Wilson points out, simultaneously achieves both incapacitation and deterrence. Nonetheless, our dispute about the importance of each is not academic. His policy proposals demonstrate as much. If incapacitation were as important as he thinks, then reducing the time to be served by low-rate offenders to increase the time served by high-rate offenders might make sense. If incapacitation does not, but deterrence does, reduce the crime rate, as I think, then increasing the time served by high-rate offenders, although just, would not reduce crime rates; and reducing the time served by low-rate offenders would be counterproductive.

Despite disagreement on this and some other points, I share most of Mr. Wilson's views; I also enjoyed reading his book.

Let me remind Hal J. Breen that I wrote that the lower age of the black population "in part" explains the high black crime rate. This, Mr. Breen says, is "true in the same sense that unemployment results when people are out of work." How does my factual observation resemble a circular definition? More reasonably, Mr. Breen also feels that the higher black crime rate comes from the "greater degree of social disorder" in the black population. But I did not address "social disorder," since my point was that there is nothing we can do about the demographic and little about the other causes he mentions, and that we should, therefore, focus on controlling crime rates by making crime pay less well. Mr. Breen has not persuaded me that this is foolish.

What Mr. Breen calls "the evolution of conscience" may be "the principal deterrent to crime," as he thinks. But conscience is not independent of punishment. In the words of James Fitzjames Stephen: "Some men, probably, abstain from murder because they fear that if they committed murder they would be hanged. Hundreds of thousands abstain from it because they regard it with horror [conscience]. One great reason why they regard it with horror is that murderers are hanged."

I agree with Mr. Breen that shunting infants from foster home to foster home will do psychological harm. Perhaps it even contributes to later criminality. But many shifted foster children do not become criminals and many criminals never were foster children. Further, children may be harmed by the behavior of their natural parents as well. This problem is only par-


CIMARRON '84
IT'S GOT THE TOUCH.
The Cadillac touch. Feel it when you put
Cadillac's road-hugging Touring Suspension to the test.
See it everywhere—from leather-faced
front buckets to push-button air.
BEST OF ALL...IT'S A CADILLAC.
Let's Get It Together...Buckle Up.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tially within the power of public authority to control and is among many I did not write about.

Mr. Breen thinks that "expected comparative net advantage" is not a satisfactory psychological theory of the causes of crime. He is right. Which is why I did not present expected comparative net advantage, on which crime rates depend, as a theory of crime causation. Mr. Breen also thinks deterrence does not work, since "very few criminals concede [any] . . . probability of being caught, . . . they assume that 'punishment' . . . will never be imposed on them." Sure. That is why they are criminals. Those who were deterred did not become criminals. As I was at pains to stress, threats of punishment do not deter everyone—or there would be no crime. Incidentally, Mr. Breen argues that deterrence did not work in 18th-century England since "crime flourished" there despite cruel punishments. How does he know that "crime flourished"? Compared to what other period? Did it "flourish" as much as it would have without penalties, or with lesser ones? Mr. Breen finally thinks deterrence is ineffective or unneeded because "even if [I] were severely punished for writing nonsense . . . [I] would [not] be likely to become a burglar [although] recognizing that crime pays." But punishing someone for writing (sense or nonsense) could not be expected to make him a burglar—merely to make him stop writing. It might.

I must disabuse Lore Reich Rubin of the idea that "young males [are] the chief perpetrators of violent crime" only in our society. They are everywhere, as far as we know, and at all times for which we have reliable statistical data. Thus, we find that the age and sex distribution of crime in England and Wales in 1842–44 (for which we have data) was the same as it is now in the U.S. Charles Goring, writing in 1913, concluded that the distribution follows "a law of nature." (I have taken these data from "Age and the Explanation of Crime," by Travis Hirschi and Michael Gottfredson in the November 1983 issue of the *American Journal of Sociology*.) I doubt, therefore, that carrying out her proposals would make much difference in the age and sex distribution of crime. But they are harmless suggestions and might be useful, even if they do not reduce the crime rate of young males.

I agree with Haven Bradford Gow's eloquent letter and thank him for writing it.

American "Europeans"

To the Editor of Commentary:

The close observer of U.S.-European relations will not be surprised by Owen Harries's "European 'Sophistication' vs. American 'Naiveté'" [December 1983]. Certainly, in the realm of culture, the Old World elites always have had a condescending view of the New World. One supposes, too, that the self-proclaimed sophistication of the Europeans reflects, in part, their view that Americans are largely ignorant of the forces of world history and essentially unfamiliar with the world outside North America. (Here, one must reluctantly concede, Europeans may be on somewhat firmer ground.) Nevertheless, it was not until the late 1970's that this European attitude began seriously to affect political—as distinct from cultural—relations between America and Europe. (One supposes that a major reason for this was Europe's justified perception of Jimmy Carter as a leader who embodied the worst aspects of American ahistoricity and insularity). . . . In the wake of Afghanistan and the aborted mission to rescue the American hostages in Teheran, West European leaders believed the world was perilously close to war. Helmut Schmidt stated that the world situation was reminiscent of July 1914. At that time, in the spring of 1980, West European leaders quite openly expressed their view that America was not up to the responsibility of dealing with events in a world gripped by Sarajevo-like tension. . . .

In 1980, the European view found clear expression in the Schmidt-Giscard axis (and the resultant call for a strong and independent Europe) and in various European initiatives to mediate between the United States and the Soviet Union. Although America has changed its President and policies since 1980, Europe's view remains essentially unchanged from that of four years ago. . . .

Whatever Europe's past wisdom in great-power politics, one can question whether that wisdom is in evidence today. Nevertheless, Americans needn't be terribly troubled by the European attitudes described by Mr. Harries. As the late Hajo Holborn noted, the long-term historical significance of 1945 was that it marked the end of the Eurocentric world system. Much of Europe's present denunciation of U.S. "naiveté" reflects a lingering sour-grapes bitterness that the mantle of world leadership has passed from "sophisticated" European hands to the grasp of parvenu America.

Yet events of the past decade suggest that now it is America, not its European allies, which displays sophistication in analyzing the nature of the Soviet threat to U.S. security. Perhaps our only naiveté is that we continue to allow the dictates of alliance politics to limit our response to the Soviet threat. There are many reasons to think NATO has outlived its usefulness (see my article in the Summer 1983 *Journal of Contemporary Studies*), but in any case it is clear that our attempts to maintain a veneer of alliance unity undermine our policy toward Moscow. In the attempt to secure allied cooperation, invariably it is American policy that is watered down, often to the point of vacuity. In the world of the mid-1980's and beyond, real sophistication calls for America to be more assertively independent in the present pursuit of its strategic objectives.

The chief obstacle to such a policy comes not from Europe's "sophisticated Europeans" but from America's own "sophisticated Europeans," for, as Mr. Harries observes in the final paragraph of his article, we do indeed have our home-grown Europeans . . . whose views are reflected in the ideas of what one might call the Vance-Kennan approach to Soviet-American relations. This is the viewpoint of the Democratic party's moderate Left and of its allies in the intellectual world and in the media. American Europeans broadly believe in the following approach to American foreign policy:

1. We should downplay the centrality of the Soviet-American rivalry in international politics and instead pay more attention to the changes wrought by the emergence of a supposedly complex interdependent international system.

2. We must devise "rules of the game" to moderate Soviet-American competition.

Basically, American Europeans believe that the Soviet leadership shares the same goals and aspirations as do American Europeans. They believe that, fundamentally, superpower tensions are the result of mutual misperceptions. Thus, such tensions are largely illusory

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and can be ended by a "dialogue" aimed at bridging the misunderstanding. American Europeans believe the superpower rivalry could be obviated if only Washington displayed more empathy for Soviet objectives and ambitions and if only Washington were more willing to compromise with Moscow.

Ironically, in the context of U.S. foreign policy, it is the American Europeans who are naive. A sophisticated approach to history reminds us that great-power conflicts are not illusory; they result from the clash of fundamental political and security interests of rival states. The Soviet-American rivalry is inherent in the nature of the international political system; it is *not* caused by misunderstandings or by clumsy diplomacy. Such factors may aggravate the rivalry but the rivalry would continue even if communications were perfect and diplomacy skillful.

It is a delusion of the most dangerous sort to believe that dialogue with Moscow, or bargaining with Moscow for influence in Third World areas, or empathy for Moscow's problems will sweep away the fundamental causes of Soviet-American rivalry. . . .

From the end of the Vietnam war to the inauguration of President Reagan, the views of American Europeans dominated U.S. foreign policy. It is no coincidence that those years witnessed a series of serious strategic reversals for the U.S. . . . The views of the American Europeans almost certainly will form the core of the Democrats' attack on the President's foreign policy during this year's campaign. We must hope that the rhetorical flexibility necessitated by the election does not insidiously affect the substance of the administration's policies toward the Soviet Union.

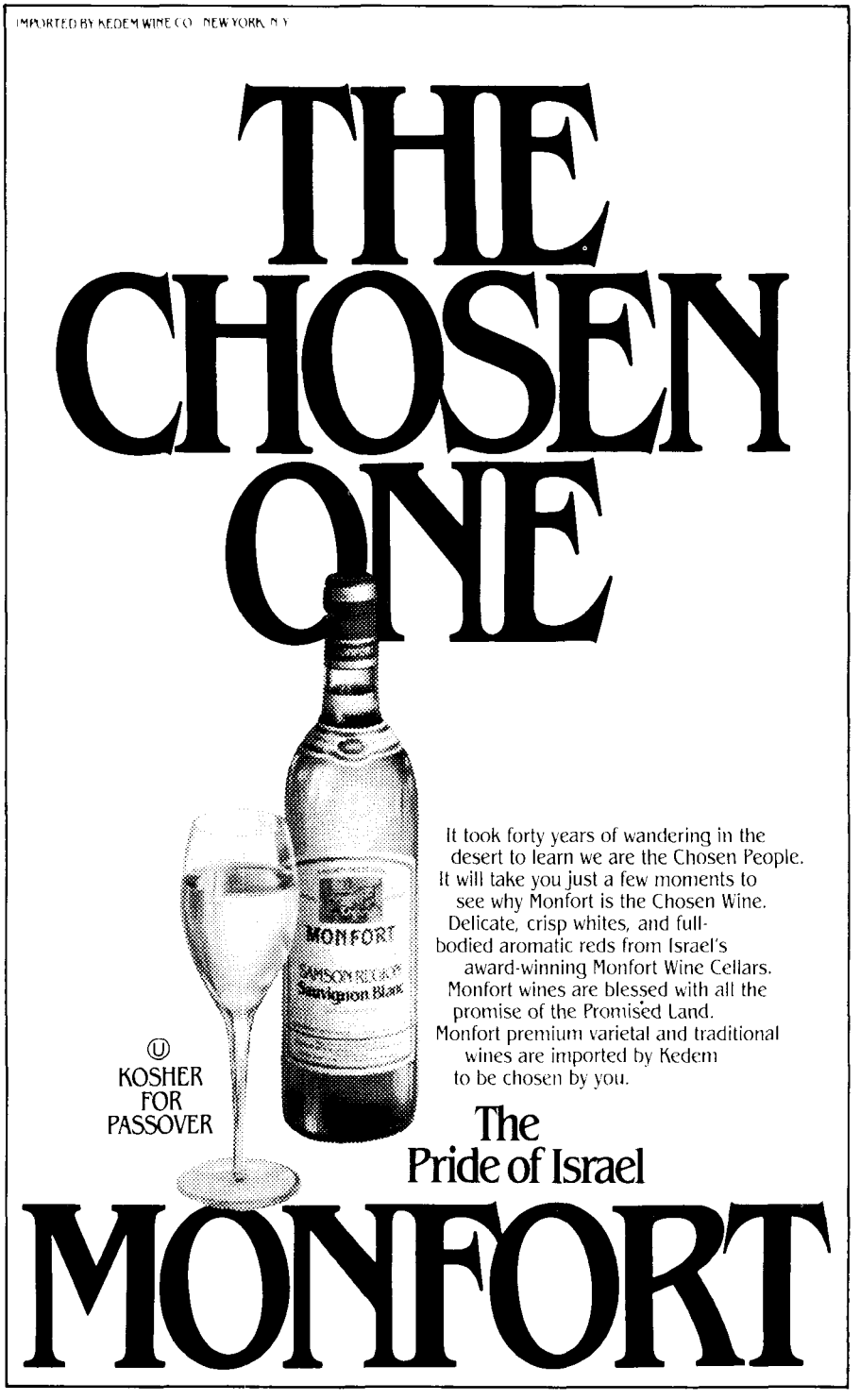
CHRISTOPHER LAYNE
Pasadena, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Owen Harries's view that fatalism and complacency are characteristic of contemporary Europe . . . is equally true of America, where we find the same superficial and simplistic outlook. . . . What is common to both Europe and America is a lack of any real foreign policy and a consequent inability to overcome the mortal dangers the world at large is exposed to. To be more precise, those involved in foreign affairs are still operating within the concept of classical foreign policy that evolved particularly over the past century and that has persisted despite the fact that the very nature of foreign affairs has changed fundamentally. . . .

Typical of the foreign policy of the past was that a number of nations—European in the first instance—faced conflicting interests within a given system. The aims . . . of foreign policy were to create alliances that would strengthen the sphere of interest of the particular nation. But even when the balance of power shifted, the system as such was not affected, only the role and power within the system of individual states. . . .

With the emergence of the Soviet Union after World War I and Hitler's Germany in the 30's, however, all this changed. . . . The Soviet Union and Hitler's Germany


IMPORTED BY KEDEM WINE CO. NEW YORK, N.Y.
THE CHOSEN ONE
MONFORT
Sauvignon Blanc
It took forty years of wandering in the desert to learn we are the Chosen People. It will take you just a few moments to see why Monfort is the Chosen Wine. Delicate, crisp whites, and full-bodied aromatic reds from Israel's award-winning Monfort Wine Cellars. Monfort wines are blessed with all the promise of the Promised Land. Monfort premium varietal and traditional wines are imported by Kedem to be chosen by you.
Ⓤ KOSHER FOR PASSOVER
The Pride of Israel
MONFORT

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

determined to destroy the existing international system within which they acted to achieve their long-term goals: world revolution for the Soviets, rule over Europe and the world for the Nazis. While the West continued to think in terms of classical diplomacy, . . . the Soviets and Nazis thought in terms of strategic goals and used diplomacy and tactical tools to gain their ends.

Now we face the Soviet Union, whose foreign policy makes full use of diplomatic and tactical maneuvers to work within the democratic countries and within international organizations like the United Nations. The aim is to destroy the Western alliance and thus create a shift in the balance of power that would enable the Soviets to create a kind of world-Finlandization. . . .

A foreign policy that is based on strategic goals is by its nature active and offensive. A foreign policy without strategic goals is reduced to diplomacy, which is by its nature defensive and reactive. Moreover, the lack of any Western foreign policy based on long-term strategy leaves all Soviet options open, whereas an active strategy would force the Soviets to accommodate and might even bring about change.

The success of the Soviet Union, despite its being economically a second-rate power facing tremendous political difficulties, is not the result of higher sophistication. In my view, Western diplomats are as a rule more sophisticated than their Soviet counterparts. It is the lack of strategic thinking . . . that strengthens the position of the Soviets. In other words, it is not the level of sophistication, naiveté, fatalism, or complacency but the fact that thinking in the realm of foreign policy for the West has not transcended theories of the past century and as a result has become divorced from the real problems of international relations.

EUGEN LOEBL
New York City

Charles Sanders Peirce

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I write to congratulate Josiah Lee Auspitz on a job well done ["The Greatest Living American Philosopher," December 1983]. I have been persuaded—I will rush out and find the Indiana University volumes that stimulated his discussion of Charles Sanders Peirce's enduring contributions to logic, mathematics, and the philosophy of science.

Unfortunately, the orthodox view of induction and deduction as complementary revelations, each providing a line of retreat when the other is doubted, has remained the entrenched wisdom in our secondary schools, and in more simple-minded college courses. Thus, the population at large is stalled in a mid-19th-century view of science—an awareness lag of some importance when one considers the full implications of the issues at stake.

Peirce made a great advance when he decided to study the fixation of belief (or, what is in his terms the same, the relief of doubt) and its conditions. This new focus resulted in the thesis of abduction—or, as Mr. Auspitz paraphrases, "successful hypothesis" as the central scientific method. Should it be necessary for each new generation to rediscover Peirce and Peircean insights on its own? Or should our pedagogy join in our continuing declaration of independence?

CHRISTOPHER C. FAILLE
Bridgeport, Connecticut

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Being, like most American philosophers, an admirer of Charles Sanders Peirce, I was pleased to see that there was a long article about him in the December COMMENTARY. Unhappily, this article disappoints the hopes it generates. While its biographical material on Peirce is informative, its philosophical material is weak, confused, and at crucial points ludicrous.

The article exhibits almost every mark of bad philosophical writing: a great many abstract nouns tied to very few illustrative examples; segues from topic to topic unmediated by logical development; names dropped in a manner to mystify informed readers. What, for instance, is one to make of the suggestion that P.F. Strawson vacillates between "fact and intuition"? And one can only shake one's head at Mr. Auspitz's caricature of "Steps Toward a Constructive Nominalism"—a highly technical inscriptionalist reconstruction of syntax—as a "manifesto." (The opening paragraph of "Steps" is indeed contentious; I suspect that Mr. Auspitz didn't or couldn't follow much beyond it.)

The discussion of "universals," the topic on which Mr. Auspitz builds his essay, is especially unfortunate. Classically, the realist has opposed the nominalist on the existence of general *things*. Both agree that Lassie is a dog, but the realist finds it necessary to posit universal doghood for this to be true, while the nominalist holds that this truth presupposes only Lassie (who is of course canine). It is preposterous to read any political content into this issue, as Mr. Auspitz does when he bases the Declaration of Independence and the Allied cause in World War II on realism. All men may be created equal whether or not there is such an entity as equality above and beyond all the world's men. Indeed, history's chief realist, Plato, was a totalitarian of the most extreme sort. Finally, to take the "community" of the U.S. as a universal is, first, to mistake a universal for a set, and, then, to mistake a set for what nominalists call a mereological sum or compound object. Had Mr. Auspitz the training to master the works of Quine and Goodman he scorns, he might not have fallen into these muddles.

Mr. Auspitz is evidently not competent to discuss Charles Sanders Peirce or any of the epistemological or metaphysical issues he mentions.

MICHAEL LEVIN
Department of Philosophy
City College, CUNY
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The article by Josiah Lee Auspitz on Charles Sanders Peirce should be required reading for every college student contemplating a career in philosophy in the United States.

Let me just add that the neglect which has surrounded Peirce has also touched another major American figure whom few have suspected either of intellectual kinship with Peirce or of gross misinterpretation—Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. As Holmes's formative essays written during the 1870's and soon to be reissued by Greenwood Press demonstrate, Holmes shared Peirce's rejection of both views of philosophy emanating from Europe—empiricism and idealism. Holmes laid the groundwork for a wholly original legal philosophy in which legal rules, like the laws of science, began as hypotheses and gradually became settled by consensus.

Despite this, Holmes, ever since a major attack by Lon L. Fuller of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Harvard in 1940, has been viewed as either a "legal positivist"—the British-originated view that a rigid separation exists between law and morals—or as hopelessly inconsistent for having cautioned against *confusing* law and morals while conceding that legal rules are "the witness and deposit of our moral life." In fact, Holmes's caution against confusion may be explained by his strict adherence, found in the early essays, to Peirce's pragmatic maxim whereby concepts must be limited to their practical consequences. Holmes found in criticizing empiricist and idealist strains of legal thought that both were led astray by loose "moral" concepts such as right and duty, distracting legal analysis from an attention to the historical origins and actual reach of particular legal rules. While law was a separate discipline, that did not inoculate it against all influence by morals.

Max Fisch suggested forty years ago that Holmes was not only influenced by his participation in Peirce's Metaphysical Club during his formative period, but may have originated a key element of Peirce's philosophy. Unfortunately, American legal philosophers are still too infatuated with the European legacy of empiricism vs. idealism to pay much attention.

FREDERIC R. KELLOGG
Washington, D.C.

JOSIAH LEE AUSPITZ writes:

I appreciate Christopher C. Faille's kind and well-chosen words. I hope, with him, that teachers, from the graduate schools down, will integrate Peirce's achievements into our educated common sense. That the prospects for this are not bright may be surmised from a prestigious introductory college text in American history. Written and reviewed by a raft of professors from the leading coastal universities, it names James and Dewey as the "fathers of pragmatism" and does not even list Peirce's name in an index which has room for such cultural luminaries as Mick Jagger, Bob Dylan, and Herbert Marcuse.

For Michael Levin's saving words about my article—that he found some of the biographical information useful—I can take little credit. This background, which is slightly condensed from a longer version available from the Sabre Foundation, comes mainly from the archives and files generously made available to me at the Peirce Edition Project by Max H. Fisch from biographical materials he has assembled over the past four decades. On the other hand, the incompetencies of style, reasoning, erudition, training, and philosophical judgment in the article are entirely my own. Any student of Peirce learns to be modest about his own intellectual powers.

Would that Mr. Levin had learned this lesson. Not only does he mistake the nature of my essay (it is not a philosophical argument or even a philosophical review but an orientation for the general reader to the period covered by the first two volumes of the Indiana edition of the Peirce papers); but also—and I find this much more disturbing—he misses entirely the thrust of Peirce's own central argument on universals and nominalism.

Admirer of Peirce though he may

THE COST OF LIVING IT UP IS GOING DOWN IN JERUSALEM.

$43.00*
PER PERSON, PER NIGHT, DOUBLE OCCUPANCY

Only at the Jerusalem Plaza can you experience the heights of luxury for a very low price. That's because we're offering you a special package deal of only $43.00* (U.S.) per night which also includes our fabulous full Israeli Breakfast. And one child 21 years of age and under stays free in an adult's room (Breakfast charge only).

And what luxury. There's nothing quite like the Kosher cuisine at the Cow on the Roof Restaurant. And you'll delight in extras such as chocolates at night and maid service twice a day. English morning newspaper. Plus, when you're staying at a CP Hotel, you have the added benefit of staying with friends.

For full information and reservations, call toll-free 1-800-828-7447 or your Travel Agent.

*Available until November 15, 1984. $15.00 surcharge April 6-25, October 10-20. Subject to 15% service charge. Minimum 7 consecutive nights. Does not apply to tours and groups.

Jerusalem Plaza

Your friends in the right places.
CP Hotels
Canadian Pacific Hotels

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

be, Mr. Levin is, as it happens, just plain wrong about the variety of philosophical realism being discussed, and this perhaps explains why he laughed in the wrong places in my narrative, kept gasping for examples, and could not follow the necessarily telegraphic allusions to more recherché issues. Since his misconstrual of the "realism" posed by the early Peirce is not limited to him, it may be worth correcting at some greater length than it takes him to state it.

Plato is irrelevant to the discussion. We are dealing with Peirce's version of Scotistic not Platonic realism—with Duns Scotus's *formalitates* not Plato's forms. In this idiom of realism, a real universal has nothing at all to do with things. The question is not whether there exists such a thing as "doghood" but whether some particular dog is, by virtue of being called a dog, what Peirce was the first to term a "token" of a "type." If the particular dog is taken as a token, as Mr. Levin concedes ("Lassie . . . who is of course canine"), then the question arises how we describe its type. Do we view the type as compounded from particulars (a strict nominalist position), as rooted in some natural fact or kind (a modified nominalist position), as enforced by social convention (another modified nominalist position), or do we (after Peirce's moderate realism) posit some general modality of signification of which that type or any other is itself a token?

This general modality—which Peirce later calls "thirdness" precisely in order to free it of any association with the world of things—is the "real" aspect of every idea but does not have any independent existence. It is a categorically distinct mode of signs as such. It cannot be intelligently reduced to what Plato meant by an Idea. In metaphysical terms it rests on a simple distinction between reality ("thirdness") and existence ("secondness") as two irreducible modes of being. It takes the modern issue of nominalism versus realism out of the dead end where Mr. Levin (and the early Goodman-Quine for that matter) still thinks it rests.

An ability to entertain the sundering of reality from thinghood is thus a threshold condition for entering into Peirce's thought. Once one gets beyond this threshold, one can see how Peirce joins issue with Ockham directly, and thus anticipates a number of topics that Ockham's followers have rediscovered. He often uses contemporary terms for them: he sees the main spirit of nominalism as "analytic"; he shows that it leads to a preoccupation with "natural kinds" and "logical atoms." Other developments (such as Strawson's "sortal predicates") he anticipates in effect but not in name. Still other sophistications (Wiggins's post-Strawsonian notion of sortal continuity) represent the movement of nominalism to cover ground for which Peirce had an alternate theory of continuous predication.

The point here is not that analytic philosophy is incapable of covering Peirce's ground, it is that he challenges the way it does so at a fundamental level without abandoning its commitment to close argumentation and precise terminology. And since analytic philosophy itself has been moving as if by some invisible hand to Peircean themes, one must begin to ask whether his generation of these themes from a more ingenious and compact composition of ideas is not superior in power, subtlety, and elegance to the materials which Mr. Levin worked so hard to master in graduate school.

Mr. Levin's letter misses such issues and in so doing betrays other errors of a very different order from those (erroneously) attributed to me. He has trouble even distinguishing my voice from Peirce's, as for example when he attributes to me the "preposterous" view, upon which I quote Peirce, that the issue of nominalism versus realism has consequences "for every public institution the constitution of which we have it in our power to influence." Does Mr. Levin think I fabricated this quotation?

Or is the deeper problem that he has his own political ax to grind? He is not, as his letter would have us believe, a philosophical purist, but an increasingly polemical writer on public-policy issues relating to women. He expounds his views in policy-oriented articles and broadcast interviews. It is perhaps not coincidental that his underlying position depends on a brittle but original amalgam of atomistic libertarianism with biological determinism that cannot absorb Peirce's post-nominalist view of "community" as inseparable from communication. The view of community with which Mr. Levin's letter concludes is of a piece with the 1867 definition of it that Peirce soon found unsatisfactory: "a mere concurrence . . . in one character."

The letter does, however, touch upon the interpretive question of the circumstances under which a technical contribution may also be a manifesto. This is not merely the quite defensible historical reading I take of the Quine-Goodman piece (published as C.I. Lewis retired and as Harvard, flushed with postwar universalism, legislated curricular requirements based upon *General Education in a Free Society*), it underlies my theme about the polemical edge to some of Peirce's own writings during 1867–71. It is, of course, a historical not a philosophical point, and is, as I took care to note, a way of making the early Peirce accessible to an audience not yet prepared to enter directly into the radical character of his philosophical work. But it does raise the further question broached by Frederic R. Kellogg's very interesting letter of the relation between logic and metaphysics, on the one hand, and law and politics, on the other.

This is not the place to settle such an issue, but I should point out, in support of Mr. Kellogg's fresh insistence on the "pragmatic" structure of Holmes's thought, that Peirce himself conceded that the pragmatic maxim originated in legal thought. After he was credited by William James as the "father of pragmatism," he insisted that Nicholas St. John Green, an older lawyer, who joined him, James, Holmes, Chauncey Wright, and others in the Metaphysical Club, was its "grandfather." I also found informative and fascinating Mr. Kellogg's observation that the Americanism of Peirce's philosophical reviews in the early 1870's has echoes in Holmes's legal theory of the same period.

At the same time, though certain leading principles of legal reasoning may have their place in Peirce's logic of science, they undergo an alteration. There is for Peirce no direct bearing of logic upon law, or science upon morals, or vice versa. Quite to the contrary: "To distinguish between speculative and practical opinions is the mark of the most cultivated intellects. Go down below this level and you come across reformers and rationalists at every turn—people who propose to remodel the ten commandments on modern science." And the reverse—the imposition of moral standards upon science—is also to be avoided: "Morality leads to a conservatism which any new view, or even any free inquiry, no matter how purely speculative, shocks. The whole

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

moral weight of such a community will be cast against science."

What would Peirce say of our current mix? Research universities looked to as arbiters of public morality, and innovators in the mores parading as scientific pioneers.

Buckley and Gratitude

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Norman Podhoretz [Books in Review, November 1983] says that the hostility William F. Buckley, Jr.'s *Overdrive* has encountered is based less on political antagonism than on the offensiveness, in critics' eyes, of such an unabashed celebration of life. *Overdrive* is offensive, but not quite for this reason. I suggest that what it celebrates is not so much Buckley's delight in his privileges as his pleasure in his own discrimination. His house is beautiful, his friends distinguished or enchanting, often both; his wine and food are perfect, his servants lovable, loyal, and efficient; even his writing, however he may hate to get down to it, is accomplished seemingly without effort and certainly without misgivings as to its quality. All this not merely gives him delight but is, incontrovertibly, delightful; it is all, somehow, *his*. It is not Buckley's happiness that makes the book intolerable, but his complacency.

One interesting detail of the style supports this interpretation: the repeated use, before some fulsome adjective, of the phrase "quite simply." Mr. Podhoretz's review contains an example: the peanut butter Buckley eats, which is "quite simply incomparable." That "quite simply" is a recurring motif. It brooks no contradiction, or even modification. Mr. Podhoretz himself has misgivings about Buckley's judgment, but he attributes Buckley's lapses to "carelessness and inattention" without asking why these should invariably produce "hyperbolic tributes." The impression I came away with is that Buckley is indeed in love with his own life (rather than life itself) and certainly more than normally self-gratulatory. In *Overdrive*, it is himself he celebrates.

IRENE NEUMANN BROWN
New Mexico State University
Las Cruces, New Mexico

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

While it was most amusing to read Norman Podhoretz's attempt to pile fulsome praise on what must surely be an inferior addition to William F. Buckley's ever-expanding bibliography, I was relieved to find that even Mr. Podhoretz could not fail to observe some signs of "carelessness and inattention" in *Overdrive*. Its author shows unmistakable and clearly pathological signs of terminal smugness, a deadly trait in any mind. While Buckley may, indeed, be in love with life, he is even more in love with himself.

MARION HUNT
Paris, France

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . In Norman Podhoretz's piece, we have what purports to be a "review" of a book; what we get instead is a public-relations piece on one William F. Buckley, Jr., who

A great airline to Israel or 70 other countries.

Lufthansa.

Lufthansa is much more than the airline to Germany. We serve 123 cities in 71 countries around the world. And one of these countries is Israel.

Wherever you go, take advantage of Lufthansa's famous service and efficiency. And if you wish fine kosher food en route, simply tell us when you make your reservation.

Ask your travel agent about us.

Lufthansa

680 Fifth Avenue, One World Trade Center (Lobby), New York, N.Y. Tel. (212) 895-1277

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for all his erudition, scholarship, knowledge of domestic and world affairs, to say nothing of his impeccable prescience, is a charter member of the worst group of people that 20th-century America has produced. That Mr. Podhoretz and Buckley come out of the same pod, notwithstanding any disparity in age or background, and are thus predisposed toward the same rigid orthodoxies regarding political and social matters, will come as no surprise to anyone over the age of ten, with an IQ over 50 and some semblance of reading skill. . . .

HAROLD B. SOMER
Westbury, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I liked Norman Podhoretz's review because of the last section on gratitude. It seems to me that thankfulness for a gift is not totally lacking today. I find it constantly expressed in ecological thought. The great gift is nature. The implicit religion of ecologists is to praise the beauty of nature's balances, to treasure and defend what no man produced (but can destroy).

Of course some (I do not know whether I should write "few" or "many" or even "most") do give thanks to God for His gift of creation. But to what extent can theology now ride on the back of a moral virtue? I say "virtue" because gratitude in the quotation from Buckley Mr. Podhoretz cites is not merely an emotion but an obligation to be carried out in action. Hence virtue must be a habit. As St. Augustine repeats Cicero, "*virtus habitus animi est.*"

Certainly Mr. Podhoretz is right that here is a virtue as Jewish as it is Christian. Doesn't Barbra Streisand's *Yentl* convey it? The old rabbi praises the Lord because he has a daughter, and the daughter expresses thanks to her departed father, holding the candle and singing for him. Is this a human basis for continuing to believe that "the souls of the righteous are in the hands of God"?

PAUL G. KUNTZ
Emory University
Atlanta, Georgia

NORMAN PODHORETZ writes:

Is Buckley complacent or is he grateful? That seems to be the question. If there were world enough and time, I think I might conceivably be able through detailed literary analysis to persuade Irene Neumann Brown, who clearly knows how to read, that my interpretation of *Overdrive* has a better textual foundation than hers. I doubt, however, that even then I could convince Marion Hunt, whose hostility to Buckley seems unshakable (and, I would guess, politically inspired). This goes even more for Harold B. Somer. Anyone who thinks that Buckley and I come out of the "same pod" is beyond the reach of any argument *I* could ever make.

If I understand Paul G. Kuntz correctly, he is saying that the ecological movement is pantheistic rather than monotheistic. I agree. But even so—and I hope I am not being ungrateful here to Mr. Kuntz for his kind words about my paragraph on gratitude—I have to confess that the ecological movement does not seem to me an exemplar of that virtue. In fact, while the thinking of the movement may reveal appreciation for "the beauty of nature's balances," it shows—to put it mildly—no gratitude at all for the blessings brought by modern technology. And those, surely, are the most salient and distinctive of the blessings that we today enjoy and that we should therefore be especially grateful for.

Stanford

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I could not believe my eyes when I read, in Tom Bethell's fine article, "Liberalism, Stanford-Style" [January], John Manley's fatuous argument that the presence and autonomy of the Hoover Institution on the Stanford campus undermine the "idea" of a university, which he describes as "nonpartisanship, objectivity, and a rejection of overt and covert political participation."

Those of us who were at Berkeley during the Free Speech Movement indelibly remember that the central issue in that affair was precisely the right of members of the university "community" (loosely defined) to use campus facilities for overtly political activities—to organize, to recruit, to propagandize, to raise funds, and to plot off-campus actions. This "right" was proclaimed in the most absolute, uncompromising terms as essential to the very concept of a university, and it was ringingly affirmed in the Academic Senate by a faculty vote in the ratio of 8 to 1. Then it was the minority opposition that was vainly arguing that a public university should remain "nonpartisan" and "free of overt political activities."

What leaves one breathless is seeing how effortlessly "liberals" slide 180 degrees over to the opposite position now that the political activities on campus are perceived by them as conservative. Can it really be that Professors Manley and Rebholz are so devoid of historical memory, of introspection, or of commitment to principled reasoning that, without the slightest pause, they can now espouse a public position flatly refuting what is widely touted to be *the* key accomplishment of the Free Speech Movement? Or are they merely opportunistic, sententious liars, grabbing whatever rhetorical weapon seems handy and effective at the moment—hoping that the rest of us have forgotten recent history?

WILLIAM R. HAVENDER
Berkeley, California

Henry M. Jackson

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I feel that in Michael Novak's article, "In Memoriam: Henry M. Jackson" [January], too little mention was made of Senator Jackson's great support of Jewish causes, particularly in regard to Israel. I remember vividly how he once told me of his personal feeling of shock and horror when, as a young soldier, he was among the first to liberate concentration camps in Germany at the end of World War II. He thought that it was his Norwegian background which strengthened his resolve right then and there to do something, throughout his life, to help rehabilitate the survivors of the Holocaust. I felt that there was in him something of an echo of Ibsen's staunch-hearted characters who often championed truth and justice against all odds and against society's own perceptions. . . .

Among the greatest monuments to his foresightedness and leadership was no doubt his fight for the East-West Trade and Freedom of Emigration Amendment, which helped open the Soviet Union's gates to Jewish emigration. Another such monument was his single-handed, successful effort to line up a majority of the Senate pledged to oppose the AWACS sale to Saudi Arabia. (That it took unusual and often unorthodox methods to erode that majority was in itself testimony to the strength of Senator Jackson's

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

convictions and the respect in which he was held in the Senate.) The fact that industry in his own home state would have benefited from the AWACS sale underlined more than anything else that "Scoop" Jackson followed conviction and not expediency. His constituency was not limited to the state of Washington—it was wherever justice and truth were at home. That is no doubt the reason he could so generously identify with Israel.

MANFRED R. LEHMANN
New York City

Pierre Monteux

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his delightful tribute to Pierre Monteux, "A Conductor in History" [January], Samuel Lipman refers to the "fabled Monteux wit." I can second his observation, from personal experience.

During the 1940's I attended a Monteux rehearsal of the New York Philharmonic at which von Weber's Jubilee Overture was being prepared. At the passage toward the end of the work where the "God Save the King" theme is introduced, Monteux, who had been conducting vigorously standing up, ostentatiously sat down. On the conclusion of this section, he stood up again.

The Philharmonic broke up, but somehow managed to finish the work together (surely an orchestra's first priority), and the balance of the rehearsal went swimmingly.

DONALD M. BLINKEN
New York City

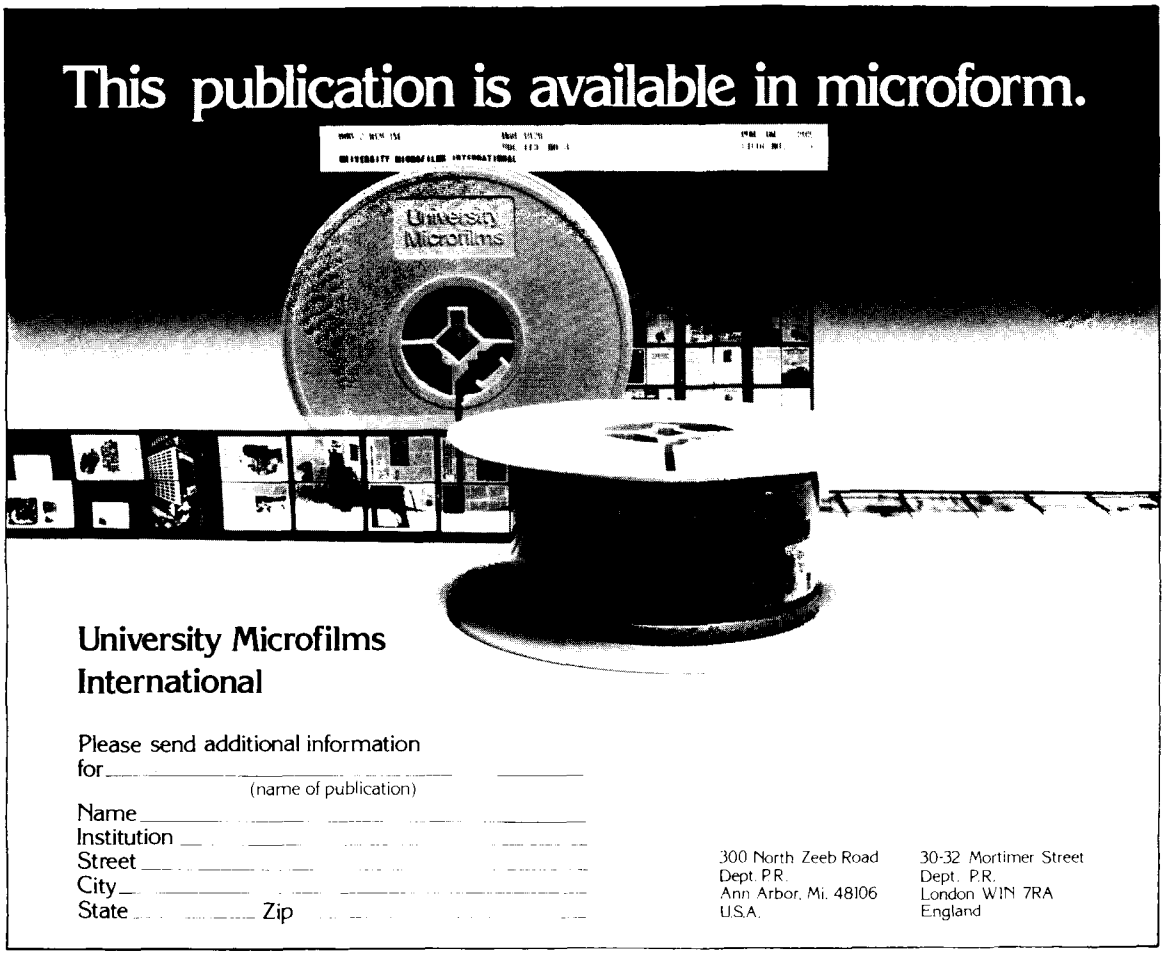
Philip Roth

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In a telling passage in Philip Roth's *The Anatomy Lesson*, a critic quotes in a letter a scatological reference to "Jewish suffering" found in one of the author-protagonist's novels. The author becomes enraged because the critic "had attributed to the author the rebellious outcry of a claustrophobic fourteen-year-old boy."

This passage does more than validate the thesis of Joseph Epstein's perceptive essay, "What Does Philip Roth Want?" [January], which I understand to be that Roth suffers from a marked ungenerosity of spirit and is in danger of exhausting his subject matter (as well as his readers). It also suggests that, even making due allowance for the difference between autobiography and fiction, Roth still possesses the insight to understand what has soured the bright promise of his earlier works. The ridicule of nouveau-riche Jewish life in *Goodbye, Columbus* was appropriate for a clever boy from Newark who had ascended to the University of Chicago. Sadly, the product of what should be Roth's mature years continues to resemble "the rebellious outcry of a claustrophic fourteen-year-old boy." . . .

No intellectually responsible person can claim that the novelist is obligated to propagandize for his own ethnic community. Probing weaknesses, defects, and pretensions is certainly part of the novelist's calling. What offends many of us who were admirers of Roth's early



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

works is that his lifelong ridicule of Jewish aspirations is apparently based on massive ignorance of Jewish thought. . . .

I have a faded clipping of Irving Howe's laudatory review of *Goodbye, Columbus* in the *New Republic* of June 15, 1959. Howe was not yet the hated "Milton Appel" of *The Anatomy Lesson*. Admiring as he was of the book, Howe was presciently troubled by the fact that, unlike other American Jewish writers who dealt harshly with their subjects, Roth "finds . . . no sustenance in the Jewish tradition." The middle-aged Roth flagellates himself more than he does the rest of us. No one can doubt his right to do so, but one must pity the souring of his muse. Would it have been different if he had heeded Hillel's injunction—and Howe's suggestion—that he "go study"?

JOEL J. SPRAYREGEN
Chicago, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

What does Joseph Epstein want? He says that Irving Howe's "eviscerating" article, "Philip Roth Reconsidered" [COMMENTARY, December 1972], "left Philip Roth in the spiritual equivalent of intensive care for . . . more than a decade." If so, then Mr. Epstein's elective surgery is clearly intended to dispatch the patient to the morgue. No longer can he say that Howe's was the "unkindest cut of all." Mr. Epstein's skilled vivisection lays bare all the parts but misses the force that pulses through them.

Mr. Epstein has extracted from Roth's generous talent an "ungenerous" spirit; from his known privacy, an invitation to voyeurism; from his explorations of compelling subjects, only a limiting obsession with sex and a rummaging among outworn topics—all so as to deliver for sport in the temple of the Philistines a blind and weakened libertine. But to reduce Roth's considerable subject matter—how to navigate between isolation and independence, between desire and love, between fame and privacy, between parental fears and parental values, between the demands of art and the demands of society, between rewarding expectations and punishing consequences—to reduce these to autobiographic petulance, Mr. Epstein has had to read Roth like a prosecutor on the make. . . .

It is not for Mr. Epstein to ask what Roth wants. He can ask what a character wants (different from book to book) or whether a character's pain is real (different from whether it's warranted). He can even say that though it is real he doesn't want to read about that particular pain any more. That at least would separate Mr. Epstein's limitations from Roth's alleged perseverations (one can tire of politics in Trollope or of eligible young ladies in Austen and leave some great fiction unread). But insisting that Roth's characters have no right to rage in pain when Roth has it so good (that is, earns so much money) is like saying that Macbeth's ambition was excessive because Shakespeare was raking it in at the Globe.

Granting Roth his readability, Mr. Epstein fails him on *re*readability, although he is "not sure exactly what [that] proves." Since among the elements that make Roth readable in the first place is a marvelous control of the reader's anticipation, keeping always in the periphery of consciousness the hero's relation to the main conflict —no longer the need of the *re*reader—Mr. Epstein finds himself unbound from the experience and free to nitpick and misread. So in *Goodbye, Columbus* he finds Roth regarding Mrs. Patimkin as a "swine" for not knowing who Martin Buber was, when really it is Neil Klugman who is critical, and only to the extent of thinking her nouveau riche and vulgar (which she is); indeed, Mr. Epstein's remark that the "rich and vulgar Jews . . . it is fair to say are the target of the novella" misses a point that is clear in a first reading, and that is that Neil is the target of the novella. He is the moralizer whose values are betrayed by his desires—to marry into Patimkin wealth. But Mr. Epstein knows that. A few paragraphs after his accusation he can say of Roth that "in his first book he was moralizing against moralizing."

Mr. Epstein's parsings are wondrous. His reread Lucy Nelson of *When She Was Good* suddenly brings a "rush of sympathy" because, though she "is mean-spirited and endlessly judgmental, throughout the novel there is someone meaner and even more judgmental on her tail—her creator, the author." Prosecutor Epstein cannot bring himself to say that Lucy is mean-spirited, endlessly judgmental, *and sympathetic* because that would be acknowledging not just talent but art; yet Lucy has no life except that which Roth has given her. There is no other Lucy. And by narrating from within Lucy's warped perspective, Roth, *not Epstein*, arouses sympathy for the bitch in pain.

Similarly of *Portnoy*. Mr. Epstein says that it "was deliberately in bad taste . . . meant to cause the squeamish to squirm, the righteous to rave." Does he really believe that this serious writer set out to achieve a public effect? Alex Portnoy certainly spews four-lettered venom, but why he has to do so is very much the issue of the book. A good boy brought up to play by the rules, he has discovered that almost no one successful does so. This is not the place to discuss all the issues in *Portnoy*, but any book that has become eponymous for its mode of narration and inventive effects can hardly be expected to command fresh wonder for those effects in repeated readings. Nothing wears worse for repetition than a funny story, even the best funny story. To reread this wildly funny book is to read beyond the humor. Beyond the humor is pain. Roth balances them in the unfolding. He is hardly responsible for scratchings beneath the folds that must forfeit that balance. . . .

What Mr. Epstein apparently wants is a return to the novel that takes on social history directly, without the intercession of raw self. And perhaps he would like to see some splicing of the 80's directly onto the 50's without all that ranting and raving in between. In Roth and others he sees undiscipline. Perhaps that is why he so overstates the use of sex in Roth, comparing his "bedscapes" to Bellow's cityscapes. Roth is not erotic, certainly not titillating. There aren't ten pages in his dozen novels that an onanist would take to the bathroom. But Roth is one of those novelists whose works become, as Lionel Trilling wrote, ". . . repositories of the dialectic of their times [containing] both the yes and no of their culture."

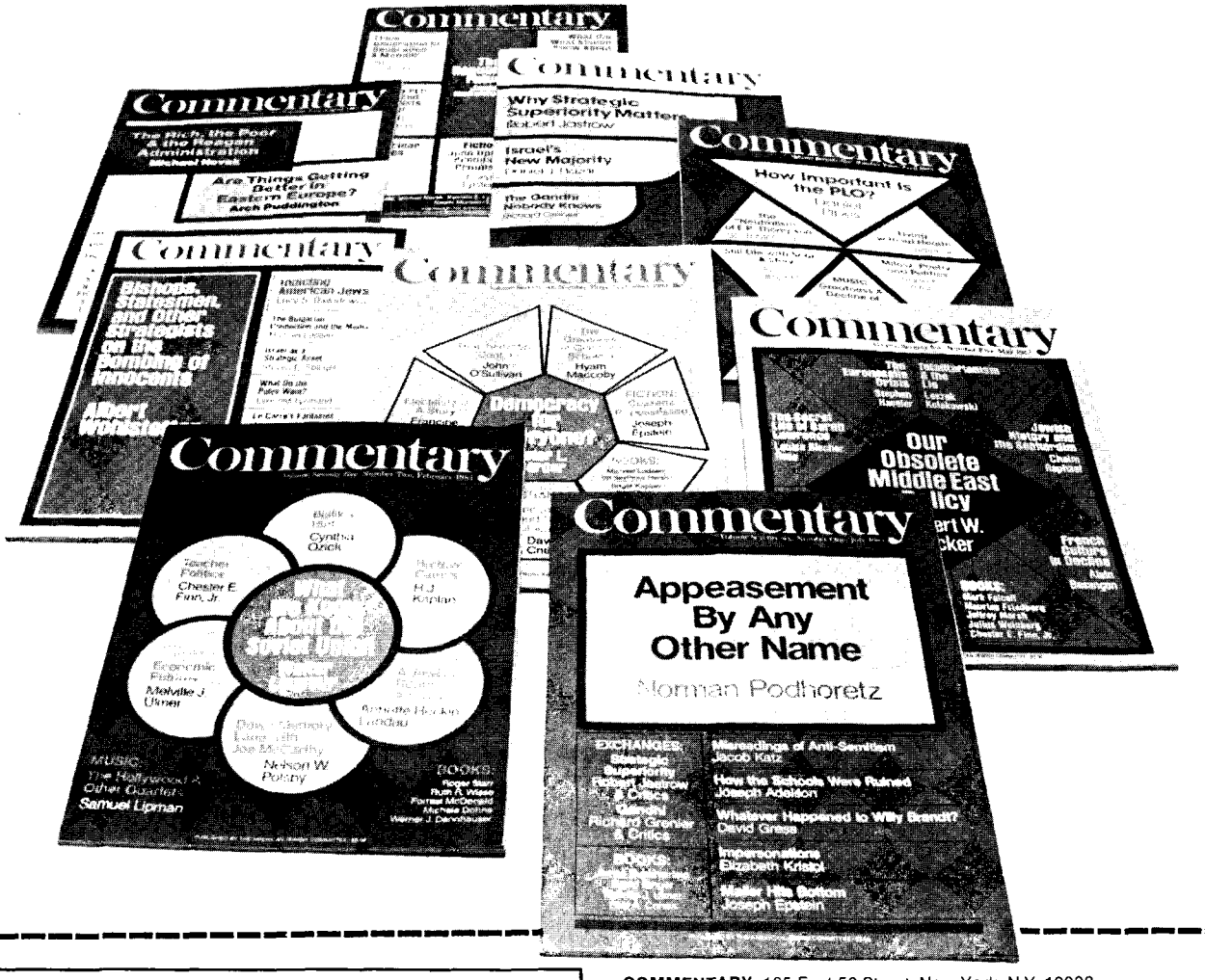
Ironically, Roth's characters, who have all come of age in the 50's, are as ill at ease with the 60's and 70's as Mr. Epstein seems to be. Each is in pain for somehow following the epoch's false leads. And the subject matter doesn't become passé just because all those mothers are either dead or in nursing homes, or because, as Mr. Epstein says, in "the war between ethical and social yearnings and sexual appetite . . .

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IN THE WORLD OF IDEAS, NO OTHER MAGAZINE COMES CLOSE.

Clarity. Insight. Perspective. Focus. The profound excitement of issues succinctly defined, brilliantly analyzed, and placed firmly in a framework of ideas that make sense of the world we live in. All this—and much more of an intellectually stimulating and culturally enriching nature—is what awaits you every month in **Commentary**, the magazine that has earned the reputation of being first in its class and way ahead of its time.

Commentary: the journal of opinion that the opinion-makers quote. "America's most consequential journal of ideas," says the *Washington Post.* "The best monthly review in the world," observes the *London Spectator.* "The best of American intellectual monthlies," states the *London Times.*



SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY OFFER

Use the coupon to start your subscription to one of the most influential and widely quoted magazines in the world. Your introductory subscription will bring you the current issue FREE.

COMMENTARY 165 East 56 Street, New York, N.Y. 10022

I want to discover Commentary's world of ideas. Please send me the current issue **FREE** and enter my twelve-month subscription for the regular price of $30.00.

☐ My check for $30.00 is enclosed. ☐ Bill me

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ethical and social yearnings lost and sexual appetite promptly departed." The dialectic of Roth's times contains, locked in painful embrace, the yes and no of many a time to come. For Joseph Epstein to subject that contest to ridicule, here in the arena of Milton Appel, is unfair sport.

ALAN COOPER
York College, CUNY
Jamaica, New York

JOSEPH EPSTEIN writes:

Alan Cooper makes a good case for the work of Philip Roth. It is difficult to imagine a better case being made. Only one thing works to weaken this case, and that is a reading of Roth's novels, which, taken together, seem so thin, so self-obsessive, finally so small-minded. I would not disagree with Mr. Cooper when he refers to Philip Roth's "generous talent"; I only disagree about the uses to which that talent has been put. The prosecution—to adopt Mr. Cooper's unkind trope—rests.

Publishing

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The rumor, suspected by writer Claudia Bemel in Jeffrey Miller's story, "Writer at Work" [November 1983], that "someone had typed out one of Jerzy Kosinski's books, verbatim, . . . and sent it around as an unsolicited manuscript; even the book's publishers had refused it (so the story went)" is, as I am sure Miss Bemel suspected, true. Fourteen publishers and thirteen agents (100 percent of my randomly selected sample group) did not recognize and rejected Kosinski's National Book Award winner *Steps* when I sent it to them as an unsolicited manuscript. Random House, the novel's original publisher, sent back a form rejection note, while Houghton Mifflin, Kosinski's publisher at the time of my experiment, wrote:

> Several of us read your untitled novel here with admiration for writing and style. Jerzy Kosinski comes to mind as a point of comparison when reading the stark, chilly episodic incidents you have set down. The drawback to the manuscript, as it stands, is that it doesn't add up to a satisfactory whole. It has some impressive moments, but gives the impression of sketchiness and incompleteness.

As Claudia Bemel discovers in Mr. Miller's tale, in the publishing game, a rose by any other name is not always a rose.

CHUCK ROSS
Santa Monica, California

Ezra Pound

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Readers of Kenneth S. Lynn's interesting review of E. Fuller Torrey's book about Ezra Pound, *The Roots of Treason* [Books in Review, January], might be interested to know that Pound's wartime broadcasts from Italy, for which he was charged with treason after the war, are available at the relatively new Museum of Broadcasting located in New York City.

The first time I visited the museum, I stumbled across Pound's diatribes in the catalogue and listened to them with no small degree of astonishment. While the substance of what he said, at times barely audible because of the short wave, was horrendous, I must admit that there was a great deal of style in it. It was easily the most striking use of words I have ever heard from a commentator, particularly one dating from the grim wartime days.

Hearing Pound under those circumstances reminded me of the 1948 debate when he was awarded the Bollingen Prize for his *Pisan Cantos*, over the protest of many who felt that the artist could not be separated from his art. Like the debate over nature vs. nurture, that over the artist vs. his art is a circle that cannot be squared.

HAROLD TICKTIN
Cleveland, Ohio

* * *

To Our Readers

In our October 1983 issue we published a translation of an article by Lucio Lami (which originally appeared in the Italian newspaper *il Giornale*) that described a meeting between Mark Brown, then a representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and Mrs. Adelia Bernard, then of the Catholic Office for Emergency Relief of Refugees. Mr. Brown categorically denies that this meeting ever took place.

Although Mrs. Bernard has continued to insist that her story is true, she recalls a different place and time for the alleged meeting from that given in Mr. Lami's original article or in a correction we later published [Letters from Readers, February]. Mrs. Bernard has also told us the name of a man who, she says, was present at her meeting with Mr. Brown. This man, like Mr. Brown, says that he knows of no such meeting.

In fairness to Mr. Brown, Mr. Lami acknowledges that his report of this alleged meeting rested on the uncorroborated word of Mrs. Bernard and so far as he knows, it remains unsupported by any other evidence.—ED.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Announcing the services of the

סוכנות בולי ישראל בצפון אמריקה

ISRAEL STAMP AGENCY IN NORTH AMERICA

Now, you may acquire the desirable postage stamps of the Holy Land from one convenient source in North America . . . at face value prices.

From the sacred city of Jerusalem . . . to the shores of the Sea of Galilee . . . the Holy Land of Israel is focus of faith for Jew and Christian alike, and hub of history's wheel for four thousand years.

Appropriately, the beautiful postage stamps of Israel reveal not only her rich and ancient history . . . but capture the spirit of a modern and progressive nation. They recall not only courage and sacrifice . . . but warm the heart with a triumph of faith and hope over sorrow which has brought light and life to all the world.

Now, through the services of the *Israel Stamp Agency in North America*, you can bring Israel's history and heritage into your own home by acquiring all of Israel's new postage stamps as they are issued . . . *conveniently*, and at the very same prices you would pay on their First Day of Issue at any Post Office in Israel.

Beloved stamps of the Holy Land

Israel's desirable stamps bring scenes and stories of the Holy Land to collectors the world over. Indeed, the *Bible* is the direct source of many of Israel's stamps, and a direct quotation from the Holy Scriptures appears with nearly every stamp issue — on a portion of the stamp "selvage," which knowledgeable collectors of Israel's stamps refer to as "Tabs."

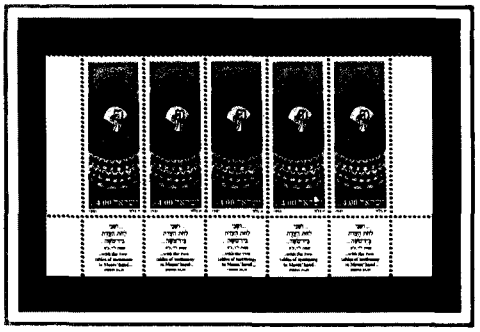
And what wonderful diversity you'll discover in Israel's many postal issues! Take, for example, the *Post Office fresh* Mint Stamps — available as "Tab Singles," Blocks of four, and in strips of five or ten . . . not to mention the exquisite Plate Blocks of four and six, and Full Mint Sheets, with every Tab, every intricate marginal inscription and every plate number perfectly intact. Or consider the Mint Souvenir Sheets . . . available with or without First Day of Issue postmarks . . . issued only on special occasions in Israel. There are also First Day Covers — which feature striking artwork and First Day of Issue postmarks — and Israel's ornate Stamp Booklets . . . which are only rarely issued. Colorful Postal Stationery will be a treasured addition to your collection, and you may also enjoy Israel's informative Souvenir

(continued on back panel)

Receive this attractive Souvenir Packet of Israel's stamps ...ABSOLUTELY FREE... just for becoming a customer now.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Tab Block of four



Strip of 5 Mint Stamps with Tabs

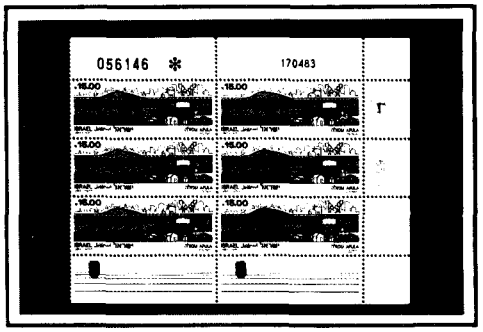
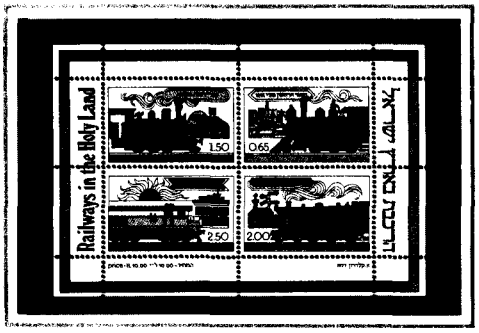
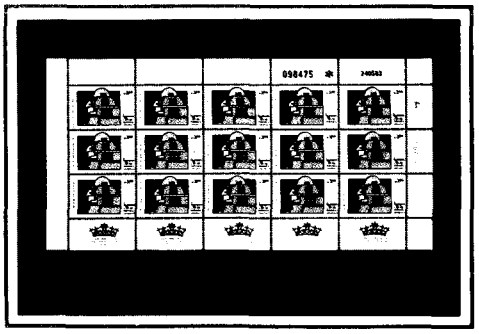


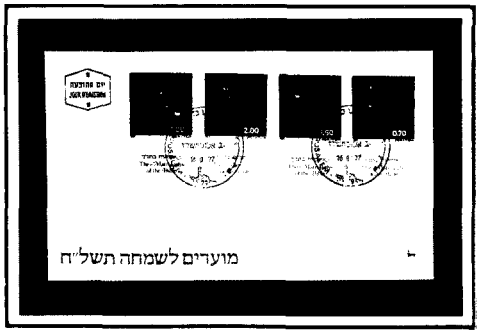
Plate Block of 6



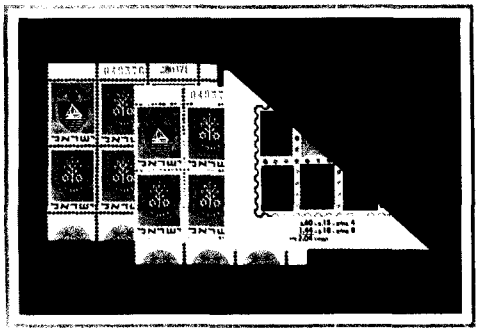
Mint Souvenir Sheets



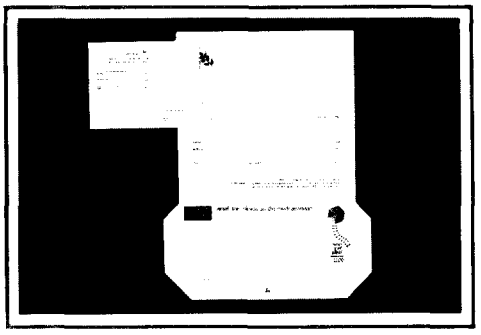
Full Mint Sheet



First Day Cover



Stamp Booklet



Postal Stationery

Postal issues shown smaller than actual size.

(continued from front panel)

Pages — describing each of Israel's new postal issues in fascinating detail.

Favorable, face value prices

Prices for Israel's stamps will be surprisingly modest. You will pay only face value (converted to U.S. dollars) for the Mint Stamps with Tabs, Mint Souvenir Sheets, Mint Plate Blocks and Booklets. For Official First Day Covers and Postal Stationery, the price will be Israel's modest Official Selling Price. There will also be a small shipping and handling fee for each shipment. Significantly, there is no extra charge for stamps with the desirable Tabs attached.

FREE BONUS . . . if you act promptly

By becoming a Standing Order Customer of the *Israel Stamp Agency in North America* now — you will receive an attractive Souvenir Packet of Israel's stamps . . . as a special FREE BONUS. The Packet includes a complete set of Mint "Tab Singles" Stamps issued in August 1983 honoring: four well known *Synagogues* issued for the New Year . . . the *Centenary of Nes Ziyyona and Yes Ha-Maala* . . . and *Afula*, a city nestled in the fertile farmlands of the Jezreel-Esdraelon Valley. Each of the seven Stamps comes with a sturdy protective transparent sleeve.

Act now to assure your standing order

To become a Standing Order Customer of the *Israel Stamp Agency in North America*, simply fill out and mail the Application. A minimum Standing Order of only one Tab Block of Four Mint stamps (which include two adjacent tabs) of each new Israeli stamp issue and one of each Mint Souvenir Sheet (when issued) has been set.

A modest deposit is all that's required to begin your collection. Or, if you prefer to *send no money now*, you may use your credit card and telephone your order TOLL FREE.

Never before has it been possible for collectors and stamp dealers in America . . . and throughout Canada . . . to so easily *and inexpensively* acquire the truly inspiring postage stamps of Israel. Do take a moment to mail or telephone your Standing Order Application *today* to: the Israel Stamp Agency in North America, One Unicover Center, Cheyenne, Wyoming 82008-0006.

Standing Order Application

Israel Stamp Agency in North America • One Unicover Center, Cheyenne, Wyoming 82008-0006

Please accept my $5 deposit to open my *Standing Order* for every postal issue of Israel, beginning with the next issue released in 1984. For each issue I will pay only the *Face Value* or *Official Selling Price** as established by Israel. There will be a modest Service Fee of just $1.25 for each monthly shipment. I will also receive my FREE GIFT of an attractive Souvenir Packet of seven Israel Mint Stamps with Tabs. I may cancel my Standing Order at any time. For each new issue, send me:

REQUIRED SERVICE	
ITEM	**QTY**
Tab Block of 4 Mint Stamps (Block of four with two adjacent tabs)	1
Mint Souvenir Sheet (when issued)	1

OPTIONAL SERVICES Subscribers may also enter a Standing Order for these items:	
Additional Tab Block of 4 Mint Stamps (Block of four with two adjacent tabs)	
Additional Mint Souvenir Sheets (when issued)	
First Day of Issue Souvenir Sheet (when issued)	
Single Mint Stamps with tabs	
Strip of 5 Mint Stamps with 5 tabs	
Strip of 10 Mint Stamps with 5 tabs	
Plate Block of 4 (no tabs)	
Plate Block of 6 with 2 tabs	
Full Mint Sheet of 15 Stamps with tabs	
Stamp Booklets (when issued)	
Official First Day Covers*	
Postal Stationery (when issued)	
New Issue Bulletins (25c per Shipment)	

*Official selling price is face value plus a modest charge (usually 6c-15c) for the envelope.
All face values will be converted to U.S. Dollars at the current exchange rate.

I prefer to pay as follows:

☐ **DIRECTLY.** I enclose a $5 deposit to enter my Standing Order.

☐ **BY CREDIT CARD.** Please charge each shipment as it is made to my:
☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express
☐ Visa ☐ Diners Club

Card No._____ Expires _____

Signature _____
All applications are subject to acceptance.

Mr./Mrs./Miss _____
PLEASE PRINT

Address_____

City_____

State _____ Zip _____

Telephone No. (_____)_____
(to expedite your order)

Your Standing Order will be acknowledged.

Shipments will be made on the First Day of Issue, unless arrival from Israel is delayed. Established on October 3, 1983, the Israel Stamp Agency in North America, a division of Unicover World Trade Corporation, is the official agent for distribution of all postal issues of Israel throughout North America.

To order by TOLL FREE phone, use your credit card and dial 1-800-443-3232 between 8 AM and 5 PM Mountain Time. For fastest service, mention this code: **51AC:DW01**

ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Jesse Jackson, the Blacks & American Foreign Policy

Arch Puddington

SINCE the time of Vietnam, when Martin Luther King, Jr. lent his considerable moral prestige to the antiwar cause, the participation of prominent blacks in the debate over American foreign policy has been a source of intermittent and sometimes heated controversy. The political landscape has undergone far-reaching changes, however, since King asserted that racism lay at the root of U.S. involvement in Vietnam in much the same way that racism had produced an unequal society at home. Then, the single act of publicly rejecting the war policies of the Johnson administration earned King a great deal of criticism, even hostility, with some of the criticism emanating from the civil-rights movement itself. Today, by contrast, the Reverend Jesse Jackson, one of King's lieutenants and currently a candidate for the Democratic party's presidential nomination, has developed a perspective on foreign policy sharply at variance with both the Reagan administration and the declared views of many leading figures of his own party. Yet while Jackson's positions on international affairs have been duly recorded by the press, they have not been subjected to anything approaching the intense scrutiny which the views of such other Democratic candidates as Walter Mondale, Gary Hart, John Glenn, or even George McGovern have evoked. This is unfortunate, for Jackson is altogether serious about foreign policy.

Jackson's ideas about foreign policy are often described as embodying a "Third World approach" to international affairs. He has criticized his Democratic presidential rivals for holding a "Europe-centric" attitude while ignoring or minimizing the needs of the underdeveloped countries, and he has condemned Americans in general for harboring feelings of "arrogance and contempt" for the impoverished nations of the Third World. Given his view that the U.S. should undertake a major reorientation in its policies toward the Third World, his positions on many of the most controversial issues of the day provide few surprises. He favors normalization of relations with the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua and a cut-off of aid to the government of El Salvador. He calls for the imposition of trade sanctions on South Africa and the elimination of policies which inhibit trade between the U.S. and black Africa. In addition, he advocates massive increases in the amount of foreign aid given African countries, and the elimination of special conditions—such as a country's support for U.S. positions in the United Nations—which the Reagan administration has attached to our assistance programs. He has also called for the U.S. to continue its membership in UNESCO.

Looked at collectively, these positions are not especially unusual. Nor is there anything outlandish in Jackson's endorsement of the nuclear freeze and a decrease in defense spending, or even his advocacy of a reduction in U.S. troop deployments in Europe. Indeed, with the exception of his strong sympathies for the PLO, there is little in the various policy prescriptions advanced by Jackson to distinguish him from many, perhaps most, liberal Democrats.

Where Jackson does diverge, however, is in his statements regarding the underlying values of American involvement in world affairs. Thus in a speech this past summer on America's role during and after World War II, he went so far as to say:

> Psychologically, America emerged out of the Second World War arrogant, militarily victorious, with a sense of "We can conquer the world." It believed that might was right, and not that right was might.

More recently, Jackson has referred to the Reagan administration as a "repressive regime" and asserted, at a meeting of representatives of the Organization of African Unity at the UN, that "Third World nations are being raped and robbed of valuable raw materials" in the service of a coming nuclear holocaust. Jackson, born and raised in Greenville, South Carolina, refers to

ARCH PUDDINGTON is executive director of the League for Industrial Democracy and the editor of *Workers Under Communism*. His article, "The New Soviet Apologists," appeared in our November 1983 issue.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

himself as having grown up as a "Third World resident in the first world," and of having been "born in occupied territory, having lived for all of my developing years under apartheid."

Jackson also makes repeated references to America's "obsession with Communism," an affliction from which he most certainly does not suffer. He has, for example, described the Berlin Wall as "a monument to a crisis in communications which has caused so much pain to so many people," a remark which betrays his entire attitude toward East-West relations. While Jackson cannot bring himself to acknowledge the Wall as a concrete symbol of Communist oppression, he does not hesitate to make the most sweeping attacks on the United States as a bastion of militarism and racism. His reaction to the invasion of Grenada is particularly revealing. Americans, he declared, "should feel a sense of outrage and disgrace" over the action, which "must be seen as part of a whole approach to foreign policy . . . characterized by gunboat and big-stick diplomacy, manifest destiny, militant adventurism, and racial insensitivity." And in a statement that is, to say the least, strange coming from a man who does not hesitate to criticize American "contempt" for the Third World, Jackson accused the Caribbean democracies which supported the landing as having "their hands stretched out, appealing for aid," and implied that Dominica Prime Minister Eugenia Charles had received a $10-million grant from the U.S. as reward for her support for the action.

Jackson did not originate the proposition that America has evolved into a racist and imperialist world bully, that our postwar "arrogance" was responsible for the cold war, that the use of our military force in the Third World reflects a deep-seated contempt for non-whites, and that the superpower rivalry is really much less urgent today than the necessity of dealing with the inequities between the rich industrialized nations and the impoverished states of the Third World. These notions were embraced, in varying degrees, by many prominent Democrats in the past two decades, including the 1972 presidential nominee. Chastened by the 1980 returns, however, most Democrats have by now disavowed the party's flirtation with anti-Americanism, whether out of tactical prudence or because of a genuine change of mind. Not so Jesse Jackson. Paradoxically, however, Jackson's continued espousal of a world view dominated by the image of a militaristic and racially insensitive America has not damaged his public standing.

Nor is this the first time that Jackson has advanced highly controversial views about world affairs at minimal cost to his reputation or influence. Indeed, Jackson's notoriety owes as much to his statements and activities relating to the Middle East crisis as anything else he has done during his career as civil-rights leader and politician. The history of Jackson's participation in the Middle East debate bears close examination. For while Jackson has successfully projected the image of a man vaguely sympathetic to the aspirations of the Palestinian people for a homeland, his statements reveal a combination of intellectual confusion, gross ignorance of modern Jewish history, a benign attitude toward the terrorist acts of the PLO, and a propensity to ascribe continued U.S. support for Israel to the money and votes of American Jews.

Jackson first became seriously involved in Middle East affairs after the 1979 dismissal of United Nations Ambassador Andrew Young for violating government policy by meeting with the PLO's representative to the UN. Along with a number of other black leaders, Jackson blamed American Jews for Young's ouster. In an address to the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Jackson ominously noted that "the Klan didn't move on Andy," leaving no doubt as to who the responsible party was. Jackson further warned that the Young affair posed a serious threat to black-Jewish relations, a theme Jackson repeated again and again and again—to the point of contributing to the very outcome he was ostensibly trying to prevent.

In a similar vein, Jackson warned that continued Israeli refusal to deal with the PLO could provoke a wave of anti-Semitism here in the United States. "Israel must not push basic white America into a corner," he cautioned, "and allow an economic excuse to cause the biggest unleashing of racism and anti-Semitism yet." His solicitude for the Israelis notwithstanding, Jackson was at the same time doing his share to stir up black resentment by, for example, urging an investigation into charges that Israeli agents had spied on Ambassador Young.

In his efforts to advance the cause of Palestinian rights, Jackson has not limited himself to making speeches or issuing press releases. In 1979 he intervened on behalf of an accused PLO terrorist who was being held in the United States, requesting that the federal attorney in Chicago explore alternatives to extraditing the man to Israel because, Jackson said, it was unlikely that he would receive a fair trial there.* At about the same time, Jackson led a delegation on a mission to the Middle East, an event which would produce some of the most negative press coverage in his career. While the trip is mainly remembered for Jackson's embrace of Yasir Arafat and his warm words of praise for the PLO, other less publicized utterances provide a clearer insight into his beliefs, style, and strategy.

For example, when Prime Minister Begin declined to meet with Jackson on the ground that the American had made anti-Semitic remarks, Jackson responded that this represented "a racist

* The accused terrorist, Ziad Abu Eain, was, however, extradited to Israel and convicted of the bombing, which had killed two people and injured 36 others in the city of Tiberias.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

decision based on skin color." He was also quoted by two American Jews traveling with his entourage as having declared himself "sick and tired of hearing about the Holocaust and having America being put in the position of a guilt trip. . . . The Jews do not have a monopoly on suffering." Jackson subsequently insisted that the statement had been taken out of context. It was during the same trip, however, that Jackson, following a visit to the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial, observed that: "The suffering [of the Jews during the Holocaust] is atrocious, but really not unique to human history," and added: "Genocide should not be allowed to happen to anyone, not even the Palestinians."

To compare the annihilation of European Jewry with the problems confronting the Palestinian refugees goes beyond even the intellectual sloppiness and moral insensitivity which mark many Jackson pronouncements. Furthermore, Jackson has on several occasions drawn the ludicrous (and, for blacks, insulting) parallel between the struggle for Palestinian "rights" and the struggle against segregation waged by the civil-rights movement in the American South. In a 1980 speech to an Arab-American organization in Birmingham, Alabama, Jackson likened the maiming of two Arab mayors, presumably by Jewish terrorists, to the 1963 bombing by white supremacists of a Birmingham church which killed four little black girls. "Let them take a few arms and legs," he exhorted his audience. "Let them bomb a few cars. But never let them take your mind and spirit." Given his equation of the Palestinians with American blacks, it seems that the role he would assign the Israelis in the Middle East drama is that of Southern white bigots.

Jackson has also launched something of a personal crusade aimed at encouraging Arab Americans to register, vote, and make their political presence felt in the debate over Middle East policy. At the same time, he has frequently decried the political influence of the Jewish community. Jackson does not hesitate to accuse the government or the Democratic party of mortgaging Middle East policies to Jewish votes and Jewish money. His observation, after the Democratic party had voted to support the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, was that the Democratic position was "perverted by a reaction . . . to the Jewish element within the party." Never one to pass up an opportunity for the rhetorical flourish, Jackson added that the relationship between Jews and Democrats amounted to "a kind of glorified form of bribery. Financial bankrolling and moral bankruptcy."

IN THE course of his presidential campaign, Jackson has become embroiled in controversy over whether he holds anti-Israel or anti-Semitic sentiments. Yet while he has apologized for using an abusive epithet in talking about Jews, he has not fundamentally changed his mind about the Middle East. Most telling in this regard is Jackson's response to a question posed by journalist Lally Weymouth, in an interview published in *New York* magazine. In the aforementioned Birmingham speech to the Arab-American audience, Jackson had declared: "We have the real obligation to separate Zionism from Judaism. Judaism is a religion. . . . *Zionism is a kind of poisonous weed that is choking Judaism*" (emphasis added). Reminded by Miss Weymouth of the quote, and given the opportunity to retract, modify, or deny it, Jackson in fact defended his statement:

> Let's deal with that one; let's deal with it one at a time. Zionism. A lot of controversy about Zionism and Judaism, you know. Zionism is rooted in race; it's a political philosophy. Judaism is religion and faith; it's a religion. And there are points on the curve where Zionism and Judaism are in conflict. To the extent to which the prophecy of Judaism is made silent by the policies of Zionism, it is a threat to the glorious flower of Judaism, which is in the Garden along with Christianity and with the Muslim religion. Again, that's not a personal position that I conjured up; that's a running debate. But I'm not ignorant of the differences between the two. There are many Jews who are not Zionists. I support the Jews in their struggle for a homeland. There are obviously extremists who've gone far beyond a homeland for the Jewish people into the occupation and suppression of other people—and that tension is gnawing away at the soul of that nation. That's [the cause] of its great internal agony right now.

Despite a certain imprecision of language, these remarks could easily be interpreted as signifying that Zionism is racism. Does Jackson really believe this reprehensible fiction? Does Jackson expect to be taken seriously when he declares that there is a great contradiction between Zionism and Judaism and, furthermore, that many Jews agree with him on this score?

Some would argue that it is not so important what Jackson's views are, that despite his current popularity, he will ultimately be perceived as a secondary figure, that his significance lies in his symbolic role as spokesman for black Americans, rather than in the specifics of his agenda. Yet if there is one thing we have learned from Jackson's controversy-filled career, it is the folly of underestimating his abilities or ambition. As has been the case with his earlier endeavors, Jackson has entered the presidential campaign with specific goals in mind. Of paramount importance is to win recognition from the white leadership of the Democratic party as the prinicipal representative of black America. Furthermore, Jackson sees himself as the catalyst of a reconstituted Left within American politics. To this end, one suspects that it is not so much the rank-and-file of Jackson's vaunted "rainbow coalition" that he is primarily attempt-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing to reach, but rather the more radicalized leadership of the various coalition groups.

ANOTHER reason to treat Jackson's foreign-policy views seriously has to do with the degree to which they reflect the dominant attitudes among black elected officials and those blacks who think and write about the question of what America's world role should be.

Here the most compelling evidence was the near-unanimous disapproval of the invasion of Grenada. Within a day or so of the initiation of military action, the Congressional Black Caucus without dissent approved a statement denouncing the intervention, a position which was subsequently reaffirmed after a meeting with Prime Minister Eugenia Charles of Dominica, a strong supporter of the invasion. To Representative Parren Mitchell, Grenada made it seem "like a world gone mad." Representative Charles Rangel accused President Reagan of having "embarked upon a frightening course of gunboat diplomacy" and argued (against all evidence) that the administration's policies were "largely responsible" for having pushed former Prime Minister Bishop "into the arms of the Soviets and Cubans." Representative Edolphus Towns declared that "the internal political problems in Grenada should not have been resolved by foreign intervention. The time of the Monroe Doctrine has long passed." Representative Mervyn Dymally claimed that Grenada (which was in fact nearly bankrupt) had been "paying its debts and acquiring a reputation as one of the Caribbean's most efficient regimes."

But these remarks were relatively restrained when compared with the condemnations voiced by other members of the Black Caucus. Representative Gus Savage declared himself "angry and in agony over our country," and charged that the invasion was at least in part racially motivated. "Reagan calculated that whites would be less concerned by the use of our bombs against black people," he said, comparing the action with South Africa's incursions into the territory of neighboring black African countries. To Representative Ronald Dellums, Grenada represented "nothing less than a crime against humanity executed by people who deserve to be condemned as war criminals." In a letter to President Reagan, Representative John Conyers asked that "the government of Grenada be returned to its sovereign position prior to the invasion so that the Grenadians can chart their own political future." He also wrote: "The American public needs to know whether the United States was involved, in any way, in covert military actions . . . including the recent coup against Prime Minister Maurice Bishop."

Conyers, Dellums, and other members of the Black Caucus did not limit themselves to expressions of outrage. Five caucus members—Mitchell, Dymally, Conyers, Julian Dixon, and Mickey Leland—were among seven Democratic Congressmen to sponsor a measure to impeach President Reagan on the grounds that the invasion violated the Constitution. In a separate move, Conyers filed suit to enjoin the American military from operating in Grenada; joining him in the action were seven Black Caucus members. Moreover, Conyers and Savage reportedly bolted in fury from the meeting with Prime Minister Charles; subsequently, speaking from the floor of Congress, Savage referred to Charles as "this puppet of our President" who "represents Aunt Jemima-ism."

The views expressed by the Black Caucus were by and large echoed by others in the black community. Joseph Lowery of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference claimed that America had "become the villain of the Western Hemisphere." A statement issued by the National Conference of Black Lawyers called the invasion a "violent and criminal" act which "represents a further step in the effort of the United States to overturn the revolutionary process in Grenada." Randall Robinson, executive director of TransAfrica, an organization established to influence Congress and the administration on issues relating to Africa and the Caribbean, stressed the racial dimension of the invasion decision. "I can't imagine that the Reagan administration or any other administration would have invaded a white country," he said. Robinson, like others, struck the theme that the invasion deprived the Grenadians of the right to determine their political destiny. The intervention, he said, "reflects a disregard for the people of Grenada and their inalienable right to self-determination."

Similar attitudes were expressed in the black press. Colin Moore, a columnist for the *Amsterdam News*, New York's largest black newspaper, wrote that the invasion signified an upsurge in "American imperialism" and, echoing Jesse Jackson and others, characterized the Caribbean nations which had supported the action as "puppets." The *Amsterdam News* itself editorialized that "Grenada is a black sovereign nation, one that has every right to choose its own form of government." The paper predicted that the island "will probably become for the short term one of those countries ruled by an imposed dictator supported and controlled by our CIA."

TO BE SURE, not all black elected officials, civil-rights leaders, writers, and academics shared the predominant posture. Norman Hill, president of the A. Philip Randolph Institute, pointed out that "the black population of the island has welcomed the American and Caribbean troops as liberators, and not invaders," adding that it is the Grenadians "who are probably more surprised at the cries of outrage of many world leaders." And Representative William Clay declared that "the so-called Marxist, ruthless, dictatorial government which took control only replaced a Marxist, ruthless, dictatorial government." Moreover, a number of prominent blacks,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

while harboring misgivings about the Grenada action, were impressed by the pro-American views of the Grenadians and privately dismayed by the militant tone adopted by Conyers, Dellums, and other critics.

Unfortunately, those with moderate inclinations were, with few exceptions, unwilling to break with the prevailing view of all-out opposition. This is partly because black moderates tend to focus on domestic concerns, partly because of a reluctance to disrupt the appearance of racial unity, and partly, no doubt, because of a disinclination to deal with the inevitable charges of having become puppets of the President. In any event, the result is that with regard to Grenada, and most other foreign-policy controversies as well, it is the most extreme segments of the black political and intellectual elite who set the tone, rhetoric, and policy —and thus who ultimately determine what, insofar as the general public is concerned, the "black position" is on the issues of the day.

Yet even if we concede that the perspective of the black community may have been distorted by the intense criticism of more radical-minded figures, the appearance of absolute opposition remains deeply troubling. While the process of Sovietizing Grenadian society had not proceeded as quickly as the leaders of Maurice Bishop's New Jewel Movement would have preferred, there was sufficient evidence in the statements of Bishop and other New Jewel leaders to suggest that a single-party state along East European lines was the ultimate goal. Furthermore, testimony about the increasingly repressive nature of the Bishop regime presented by the growing community of Grenadian exiles, many of whom had initially welcomed the Bishop government, should have suggested to American blacks that a more detached attitude toward the New Jewel "experiment" was called for. Given the demonstrated willingness of the surviving New Jewel faction to insure control through violence, the glib demands that Grenadians be allowed to decide their own destiny could easily have amounted to a death sentence for opponents of the regime. The regime had the guns; behind the regime stood the Cubans, among whose functions was to serve as a praetorian guard for whichever pro-Communist group held the reins of power.

Even more disturbing were the shameful attacks leveled at the motives and character of the Caribbean leaders who supported and helped plan the invasion. On this score, the statements of Jesse Jackson and others were distressingly reminiscent of the heyday of Black Power, when moderate civil-rights leaders were routinely castigated as Uncle Toms who had been bought off by the white power structure. Some critics of the intervention refrained from questioning the motives of other Caribbean countries, but did express differences with the assessment that Grenada posed a danger to its neighbors. Yet that such a threat existed is undeniable. Maurice Bishop succeeded in overthrowing the government of Sir Eric Gairy, and Gairy had maintained one of the largest security forces in the region. The New Jewel Movement was holding regular conferences with like-minded radicals from the Caribbean, and Grenada had built up, practically overnight, an army of unprecedented size by Caribbean standards. Add to this the long history of Soviet-Cuban subversion in Latin and Central America, and it becomes obvious why the Caribbean democracies summarily rejected the argument that they had "nothing to fear" from the New Jewel revolution.

IRONICALLY, the Caribbean leaders so casually dismissed as puppets of the United States did an altogether impressive job of enhancing the image of competent and decisive black political leadership during the early days of the invasion. The three most outspoken supporters of the intervention—Eugenia Charles, the Jamaican Prime Minister Edward Seaga, and Prime Minister Tom Adams of Barbados—effectively put paid to the myth that the only viable Third World alternatives lie between a Pinochet and a Castro. During a discussion with Representative Dellums in the aftermath of the invasion, Adams, according to one report, cautioned the American: "Do not assume that you know better than we what is in our national interest." Unfortunately, there is little evidence that Adams's message has reached those in the United States who most need to hear it.

For one thing, many black foreign-policy specialists and activists display a decided preference for revolutionary, "socialist," and anti-Western regimes in the Third World. For them, a Maurice Bishop is preferable to a Eugenia Charles; in all likelihood a Fidel Castro is preferable to an Edward Seaga. (At least one prominent black political figure, Boston's Mel King, has stated a preference for Castro over Ronald Reagan because, in his view, Castro cares more about poor people.)

There is an analogous impulse to attribute domestic unemployment and poverty to American defense expenditures and to view our defense policies as the major threat to world peace. Perhaps the most striking example of this reflexive anti-defense posture was the statement by the Congressional Black Caucus condemning the defense policies of President Jimmy Carter. The statement, drafted by Dellums, was released in February 1980, shortly after Carter had announced the package of sanctions the U.S. was imposing on the Soviets because of the invasion of Afghanistan. The Soviet action was, briefly, condemned as "morally wrong and politically stupid." Even here, however, the Black Caucus placed its emphasis more on the invasion's damaging political repercussions than on the unrestrained brutality of the Red Army. The intervention in Afghanistan, it said, would lead to "an inevitable swing to the Right in both political parties" and provide "an excuse for interfering in the internal affairs

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of Pakistan on the pretext of aiding the Afghan rebels." As for American countermeasures, they were branded as "madness," "a threat to the constructive search for world peace," based on "political overreaction and alliance with corrupt dictatorships," and showing "obsessive concerns with overreactive responses to the real or imagined menace of Soviet expanionism."

As CRITICAL of American policy as it was, the Black Caucus position paper was mild compared with the treatment of foreign-policy questions at the "March on Washington for Jobs, Peace, and Freedom," held this past August to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the original march, made notable by Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech. The original march, it should be recalled, did not contain a foreign-affairs dimension: it focused on two goals—jobs and freedom, and specifically on the necessity of winning passage of civil-rights legislation then before Congress. But while foreign-policy issues were not placed on the agenda of the original march, the question of America as a democratic society was central to the message presented by King and the other speakers. King described his dream as "deeply rooted in the American dream," where "all men are created equal," and where "the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slaveowners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood." America was a flawed society because of the injustice inflicted on its black citizens, but it nonetheless was a society based on the highest of political values—freedom, democracy, equality before the law.

By contrast, the prevailing atmosphere at the 1983 March for Jobs, Peace, and Freedom was one of castigation and chastisement, with the United States as principal target. As the march's declaration of principles put it, the American dream "is tarnished today as the tides of national self-doubt, aggressiveness, and chauvinism of race, sex, class, and nation are seriously undermining our national unity and sense of human solidarity." To counter what they saw as a growing national malaise, the march organizers called for the creation of a "Coalition of Conscience," a "community and a movement brought together by a common dream and human values."

This coalition, however, was quite different from the broad mass of Americans to whom King addressed his inspirational words twenty years earlier. Included in the official list of sponsors and speakers were a number of organizations and individuals who have devoted years to promoting and defending some of the world's most repulsive dictatorships, the Soviet Union among them. Nor could these groups and individuals have been disappointed by the treatment of defense and foreign-policy issues in the declaration of principles, which attacked a "military budget which . . . denies our people scores of absolutely essential human resources and service programs." It also criticized the "militarization of internal conflicts, often abetted and even encouraged by massive U.S. arms exports, in areas of the world such as the Middle East and Central America. . . ." No mention was made of Eastern Europe, Poland, Afghanistan, or even the Soviet Union, except insofar as could be implied by passing reference to "the superpowers."

The special slant given the sections on foreign affairs was not the result of haphazard phrasing by a drafting committee. The seriousness with which the event's sponsors regarded their formulations was demonstrated by the response to a series of moderate changes in the declaration of principles proposed by the AFL-CIO. A suggestion that a phrase condemning terrorism be inserted was rejected on the familiar ground that "one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter." Similarly, a proposal to include an explicit condemnation of dictatorships of the Left and Right was rebuffed —because, an aide to Coretta Scott King explained, there is no such thing as a left-wing dictatorship. Nor was a request to add a phrase criticizing the violation of human rights in Poland taken up by the drafting committee. Finally, a suggestion to delete or modify language implicitly critical of Israel was rejected on the ground that Jesse Jackson felt strongly that this language should be retained.* (Further evidence of the determination of the march's sponsors to make clear their critical attitude toward U.S. support for Israel was the otherwise puzzling inclusion of former Senator James Abourezk, a strong PLO advocate, as a march convener.)

THEN there is the case of TransAfrica. Established in 1977, TransAfrica's major function, as noted above, is to provide information about and organize lobbying campaigns on behalf of the black nations of Africa and the Caribbean. The figure most prominently associated with the organization is its director, Randall Robinson, and it is a tribute to his energetic leadership that TransAfrica has gained recognition as the leading voice for "black" foreign-policy positions.

Much of TransAfrica's activity is devoted to persuading American policy-makers to adopt a tougher stance toward the apartheid regime in South Africa; not surprisingly, the organization has been sharply critical of the "constructive engagement" position embraced by the Reagan administration.

But it is on issues other than South Africa where the ideological presuppositions of TransAfrica are manifested most vividly. One theme which recurs in the organization's publications and position papers is the disruptive, destabilizing impact of American military involvement in the Third World.

* The failure of negotiations prompted the AFL-CIO, which endorsed the march itself, to withhold support from the declaration of principles.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

On the other hand, Soviet and Cuban interference is viewed with a mixture of tolerance and approval. Thus a 1982 position paper took a critical attitude toward American support for Somalia in that country's struggles with Ethiopia, while ignoring the central role which the presence of Cuban troops has played in transforming the Horn of Africa into a geostrategic battleground. The same paper described Cuba has having achieved "an impressive record in health-care delivery, housing construction, and public education." Nothing was said about Cuba's systematic violation of human rights, the absence of press freedom, the persecution of artists and writers, the treatment of political prisoners, or, most relevant to TransAfrica's concerns, the export of Cuban soldiers and the Cuban political system to the Third World. In fact, except for its justifiable anger over the repression of South African blacks, the issues of human rights and democracy do not figure in TransAfrica's determination of what is and what is not worth supporting in the Third World. The intrusion of the issue of democracy would, of course, complicate TransAfrica's assessment of some of its preferred regimes —Castro's Cuba and Bishop's Grenada front and center.

TransAfrica also presents a seriously distorted picture of the role played by Jonas Savimbi's UNITA forces in the Angolan civil war. Indeed, according to TransAfrica's version, no civil war exists in that country. Rather, we are told that the conflict there pits the Marxist Luanda regime and its Cuban allies on the one hand against the South Africans on the other. In this view, Savimbi's troops were militarily defeated in 1975, "discredited" by their association with the Pretoria regime, and have not been a factor ever since. No one, and certainly not Savimbi, denies that UNITA has received assistance from South Africa. Nevertheless, it is widely acknowledged that UNITA, largely through its own efforts, has gained control over large sections of Angola and has demonstrated impressive abilities as a guerrilla fighting force. What explains TransAfrica's refusal to concede UNITA's viability as an insurgent force with popular support in at least some areas of the country? The probable answer is that to acknowledge the existence of a popular resistance force would weaken Luanda's claim to legitimacy, and possibly even set off demands for negotiations, coalition governments, or the various other schemes for power-sharing that have been advanced regarding the conflict in El Salvador.

TransAfrica has also come down firmly in favor of American recognition of the PLO. This position, not unusual in itself, is nonetheless notable for the scathing criticism of Israel and the American Jewish community which accompanies it. In a statement issued shortly after Ambassador Young's 1979 dismissal, TransAfrica qualified its criticism of PLO terrorism by noting that such acts do not make the PLO "inherently terroristic, any more than the former acts of Israel's leader [Begin] while in the Irgun, or the fact that the state of Israel has also resorted to terrorism in the name of state and national security makes the Israelis an inherently terroristic people." While TransAfrica placed itself on record as favoring Israel's right to exist, it found it necessary to include a phrase deploring "the circumstances under which it came into being" as "unfortunate." Furthermore, the statement supported "the Palestinian right of return and the restoration of the state promised in UN Resolutions 184 and 191." By citing these two resolutions, particularly resolution 184, which established the original partitioned state, TransAfrica went well beyond the usual calls for a Palestinian homeland on the West Bank. Some, in fact, would interpret this position as a de-facto call for Israel's dismemberment.

Two more elements of the document are worth noting. At one point, TransAfrica observes with approval that many Arab and African states have reached the conclusion that "Israel and South Africa represent examples of a similar phenomenon, 'settler colonialism,' or arrogant, aggressive, racialism." Finally, an outright accusation of dual loyalty is brought against American Jews:

> We are styled "the black lobby for Africa," and sometimes compared with "the Israeli lobby" by people who wonder if we can "do for Africa what the Jews have done for Israel." We do not seek to do what they have done. We do not seek to hold American policy or action to ransom in the interest of this or that policy or ambition of any foreign country.

It should be stressed that, at least where Israel is concerned, TransAfrica's strident opposition does not represent the sentiments of the majority of black political and civil-rights leadership. An analysis of the voting records of the Congressional Black Caucus on issues relating to Israel and the Middle East since 1975 shows a degree of support for Israel roughly comparable to most liberal Democrats. Black Congressmen like Charles Rangel, Augustus Hawkins, Cardiss Collins, and William Clay have supported measures designed to strengthen Israel 90 percent of the time or more. The two major exceptions are Dellums and Conyers, with the latter having compiled one of the most anti-Israel records in Congress. Conyers also speaks out frequently on behalf of the PLO. This past August, for example, he sent a letter of greetings to the PLO and Yasir Arafat urging them to keep up their "struggle for peace."

THE parallel between the support for Israel among black Congressmen and their white liberal colleagues holds true (on the other side) for other foreign and defense issues as well. Indeed, for both groups, it is impossible to separate the harshly critical attitude toward American global policies from the general collapse of liberal anti-Communism as the prevailing ideology of the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Democratic party. The positions adopted by the Black Caucus may be more provocatively phrased than similar statements issued by Americans for Democratic Action, but the underlying assumptions are similar. The same can be said of the opposition of blacks to American interventionism in the Third World. The instinctive reaction of white liberal Congressmen to the rescue mission in Grenada was one of opposition; it was only after the overwhelming majority of Americans expressed support for the intervention that most Democrats underwent a reluctant shift.

Yet even by the standards of today's liberalism, the Black Caucus exhibits an unusually pronounced tendency to oppose both measures designed to strengthen the defense capabilities of America and its allies and policies designed to counter the influence of Communism. To cite several examples: in 1978 the Democratically-controlled House rejected by an overwhelming 301–88 margin a proposal to reduce U.S. troop levels overseas and to cut the level of active duty forces overall by 50,000 men; the entire Black Caucus voted for this measure. During the same term of Congress, a majority of black Congressmen voted to reduce American military aid to South Korea, a measure which was defeated, again overwhelmingly. Finally, last year, Democrats by 150–105 favored a measure to authorize funds for Radio Martí, the government-sponsored broadcast service established to provide information to Cubans; among the bill's supporters were such critics of American foreign policy as Barney Frank, Morris Udall, Michael Barnes, Don Bonker, and Barbara Mikulski. Yet only two of the 21 members of the Black Caucus—Cardiss Collins and Alan Wheat—voted favorably.

As is true of any Congressman, members of the Black Caucus are influenced in their votes by constituency pressures. However, with a few exceptions, black Congressmen represent districts where not simply a majority, but an overwhelming majority, of the voters are black. In these districts, comprised often of impoverished inner-city areas, foreign policy takes second place to the debate over economic issues and social-welfare programs. Those for whom the issue of America's world role is a matter of high priority often hold far-Left views or are attracted to black nationalist philosophies. Although it is impossible to estimate with any precision the degree of influence exerted by such groups, they do represent a more substantial factor in local black politics than would ordinarily be the case in predominantly white districts.

A striking example of such influence can be found in Jesse Jackson's entourage. During the debate over the establishment of a national holiday to commemorate Martin Luther King's birthday, Senator Jesse Helms made pointed accusations about King's associates. At the heart of the controversy was the charge that the late Stanley Levison, one of King's closest and most trusted advisers, was a secret Communist agent. The FBI strongly believed this to be the case; it was, in fact, because of concern about Levison's influence over the leading figure in the civil-rights movement that the bureau initiated its surveillance of King. King himself was clearly not a Communist; indeed he denounced Communism as an atheist dogma. But there is substantial evidence—gathered in David Garrow's *The FBI and Martin Luther King, Jr.**—to suggest that the FBI's suspicions about Levison were warranted.

One of Levison's contributions was to recommend the hiring of Jack O'Dell as an assistant to King, which King subsequently did. According to Garrow, O'Dell had an association with the Communist party from the late 1940's until at least the late 1950's, a relationship which, Garrow notes, O'Dell himself has never denied. The FBI, furthermore, believed that O'Dell had been elected to the party's national committee in December 1959, under a pseudonym. Although he never occupied a leadership position within the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, O'Dell was considered one of the organization's most competent staff members.

The reason that O'Dell's past affiliations and present views are of some importance is that for some time (although we would scarcely know this from press coverage of the Jackson campaign) he has served as Jesse Jackson's chief foreign-policy adviser. As director of the international department of Operation PUSH, O'Dell has accompanied Jackson on many of his international trips, including several to the Middle East.

Since launching his presidential campaign, Jackson has on at least one occasion been asked about O'Dell's political affiliations, and has responded that O'Dell is not now a Communist. But the question of whether O'Dell is technically a party member is essentially irrelevant. On an organizational level, O'Dell has associated himself with several pro-Soviet institutions, serving on the editorial board of *Freedomways*, a political journal which consistently adopts a pro-Soviet position, and as a member of the World Peace Council, a transparent Soviet-front organization (O'Dell served as American delegate to the Peace Council in 1977). Furthermore, we know something of O'Dell's current attitudes from articles he has written for *Freedomways*; typical is a 1980 piece in which O'Dell claimed, *inter alia*, that the decisions to proceed with construction of the MX missile and B-1 bomber "have nothing to do with the defense of the United States" but have "everything to do with the federal government's guaranteeing favorable profit margins . . . to corporate giants." In a similar vein, he claimed that " 'the-Russians-are-coming' paranoia . . . has proven to be a very profitable

* See the review by Eric M. Breindel, COMMENTARY, January 1982.—ED.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

enterprise for the biggest conglomerates in the war industries." And finally:

> An aspect of the world community's perception of Afro-Americans is the increasingly held view that while South Africa, with its ruthless apartheid system, represents the fullest expression of a racist state, the government and society which are the most consistent upholders of the racist doctrine of white supremacy in the world at large are these United States.

It goes without saying that O'Dell says nothing to challenge this alleged "perception."

IN RAISING the question of O'Dell's relationship with Jesse Jackson, it should be stressed that there is no suggestion that Communists have subverted the civil-rights movement or dominate the thinking of black political leadership. It is true that among the CP leadership today, the secretary of the central committee, the national chairman, the head of the youth wing, and the organization's most prominent public figure, Angela Davis (recently nominated as the party's vice-presidential candidate), are all black; it is also the case that prominent blacks regularly speak to or serve as members of various front groups, such as the World Peace Council or Labor Research Associates, which in 1982 honored the Black Caucus at its annual dinner. Nevertheless, the Communists have been notably unsuccessful in their attempts to gain the allegiance of the younger generation of black politicians, the more radical of whom seem to find nationalist or Pan-Africanist ideologies far more appealing.

Indeed, the continued disapproval of the Soviet Union by black political leaders is a source of distress to some radicals. The issue was addressed with uncharacteristic bluntness by John F. Davis, a former editor of the *Amsterdam News*, shortly after the invasion of Grenada. Davis found it "amazing that the Congressional Black Caucus apparently does not recognize this invasion as an opportunity to organize and educate people to some of the Third World realities." The major reality, as Davis saw it, was that "All the liberation movements [in this hemisphere] have been and continue to be supported by the Soviet Union" and that "the threat to peace in the world today emanates from Washington and from the efforts of the American government to exploit the world's resources."

If nothing else, Davis's observations have the merit of candor. He realizes that the struggle for a more just sociopolitical order in the Third World cannot be separated from the broader competition between the United States with its democratic values and the Soviet Union with its totalitarian ones. It is tragic that neither Jesse Jackson nor many of the black political leaders for whom he speaks seem to recognize that democratic liberties are as essential to the nation-building process as economic development, and that those in the Third World who find inspiration in the Soviet "model" are not liberators but rather betrayers of the societies they seek to change. Given the near certainty that blacks will become an increasingly influential force in American political life, this attitude represents a serious obstacle to the refashioning of a national consensus around a policy aimed at the spread of democracy and the restraint of Soviet expansionism.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Marxism vs. the Jews

Paul Johnson

WHY is anti-Semitism, at least in its new "respectable" form of anti-Zionism, now found predominantly on the Left of the political spectrum? Why in particular is this new form increasingly common among intellectuals?

If we begin by tackling the second question first, we find a curious paradox. Anti-Semitism is one of the oldest and most persistent forms of human irrationality; yet its theoretical basis has always been the work of intellectuals.

The paradox can be explained. It is true that intellectuals seek to understand phenomena by reason. But in their search for radical explanations, which excite the mind by their audacity and comprehensiveness, they tend to stumble into gigantic fallacies. Inside many intellectuals there is a conspiracy theory of the universe struggling to get out, and sometimes succeeding. And anti-Semitism is the father of all conspiracy theory.

The first layer of anti-Semitism, itself a form of anti-Zionism, was laid down by Manetho, a priest from the intellectual community of Heliopolis in Ptolemaic Egypt, about 280 B.C.E. He presented the Jews as wanderers by nature, descendants of an outcast tribe of lepers, who had no natural land of their own. His theory underlay the response of Hellenistic intellectuals to the disquieting phenomenon of Judaism: they argued that the Jewish rejection of Greek syncretism and universalism was a form of misanthropy; the Jews were a dislocated people without true territorial title deeds, and their Diaspora was a conspiracy against humankind. This was the intellectual justification for the first systematic persecution of Jews by Antiochus Epiphanes in the 2nd century B.C.E. In Roman times a second layer of theory was added by both Greek and Latin writers: Lysimachus of Alexandria; Apion; Nero's tutor Chaeremon, who inspired the second great wave of persecutions; and by Horace, Martial, Tacitus, and Juvenal.

A third layer was contributed by Christian writers, including some of the greatest doctors of the church, such as Gregory of Nyssa, John Chrysostom, Ambrose, Augustine, and Gregory the Great. Some Christians taught that the deicidal Jews were in both local and universal conspiracies with Satan, a notion later explored in innumerable plots and sub-plots by the investigators of the Inquisition. The writings of Luther added yet another layer of anti-Semitic theory which became the pattern for prejudice in Protestant Europe. When the intellectuals of the Enlightenment came to undermine Christianity in the 18th century, they produced the first secular layer of anti-Semitism: Diderot and still more Voltaire engaged in the most virulent attacks on Judaism, partly as an indirect but safer way of attacking the more dangerous target of Christianity.

This meant that the intellectual foundations of the modern world were warped by anti-Semitism, for virtually all modern writers were influenced, directly or indirectly, by Voltaire. So at a time when the old Christian myth of the Jews in conspiracy with the Devil was losing its force, at least in Western and Central Europe, anti-Semitism acquired a non-religious dynamism. It was at this point that a connection between the Left and anti-Semitic theory was first established. The early French socialists linked the Jews to the new Industrial Revolution and the vast increase in world commerce which marked the beginning of the 19th century. In a book published in 1808, François Fourier identified commerce as "the source of all evil" and the Jews as "the incarnation of commerce." The same line was taken by Pierre Joseph Proudhon: in a world poisoned by greed and materialism, the Jews were "the source of evil," who had "rendered the bourgeoisie, high and low, similar to them all over Europe." "We should send this race back to Asia or exterminate it." Fourier's pupil, Alphonse Toussenel, worked out in detail the notion of a worldwide financial conspiracy against humanity, run by Jews.

These ideas of the early French socialists became part of the mainstream of French anti-Semitism, later reflected in the propaganda of Edouard Drumont and Charles Maurras's Action Française. They were also an early prototype for the National Socialism of Hitler's Germany. Equally important, however, they formed part of the background to Karl Marx's notions of how the world economy

PAUL JOHNSON is the author of *Enemies of Society*, *A History of Christianity*, and, most recently, *Modern Times: The World from The Twenties to the Eighties* (Harper & Row). He was formerly editor of the *New Statesman*.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

worked. The main element in Marx's intellectual formation was, of course, German idealism. Thanks partly to Voltaire, this had always possessed a certain anti-Jewish coloring. As Robert Wistrich has pointed out, the antagonism toward the Jewish religion of the German idealists underwent "a progressive vulgarization," through Kant, Fichte, Hegel, and then Ludwig Feuerbach and the Young Hegelian Bruno Bauer, the last of whom was Marx's particular mentor. It was Marx's sinister achievement to marry the economic anti-Semitism of the French socialists to the philosophical anti-Semitism of the German idealists and so to construct a new kind of anti-Semitic conspiracy theory which was to be an intellectual rehearsal for his general theory of capital.

Here it is not amiss to reflect on the rational frailty of intellectuals. The moment they emerge from one form of obscurantism, they plunge eagerly into another. In the second quarter of the 19th century they were stripping away, as they saw it, the accumulated layers of millennia of religious superstition. But almost in the same moment they substituted new, secular ones. Satan was dead but lo! legions of new devils were everywhere conspiring against mankind. In Italy it was the Freemasons, in France it was the Protestants, in Germany it was the Jesuits; and always, everywhere, it was the Jews too. If one conflated these various conspiracy theories, the Jews were revealed as simultaneously in league with Freemasons, Protestants, and Jesuits. Satan might be dead but Rothschild had taken his place. Jewish intellectuals abandoning their Judaism were almost as prone to these fantasies as Christian intellectuals abandoning their Christianity. It was Heine who coined the characteristic epigram of the epoch: "Money is the God of our time and Rothschild is his prophet."

MARX, the self-elected scourge of all superstition, religious or secular, the paladin of rationality, who set out to sweep away all the cobwebs of the past from the face of the world, and to reveal it as it really was, might not Marx of all people—himself descended from long lines of rabbis on both sides—have disposed of this particular superstition once and for all, and finally rid the world of its two-thousand-year-old burden of anti-Semitic fantasy? In fact he did the opposite. He reinforced it. He gave it a whole new lease on life, and new, respectable garments of pseudo-rationality, calculated to appeal to the young of successive generations.

There can be no doubt that as a young man Marx was anti-Semitic. He got his theoretical anti-Semitism from Bruno Bauer, a lifelong anti-Semite. In the early and mid-1840's, when Marx was in his twenties, his anti-Semitism was acute. It is true that, later, anti-Semitism ceased to be, for Marx, one of the keys to the universe. But there is ample evidence that his prejudice remained. In 1861, to quote only one significant example of many, we find him in a letter to Engels repeating as "proved" Manetho's original claim that the Jews were a race of lepers, a rootless people without a country—what might be called the primeval matrix of anti-Semitism.

Like most cases of anti-Semitism, Marx's was based on ignorance, reinforced by a personal experience from which he generalized. His father was baptized a Lutheran the year before Marx was born. His education was classical, not Jewish, and took place mainly at a former Jesuit academy whose other pupils were predominantly Catholic. Marx knew very little about Jewish religion, history, or culture and never showed any desire to acquire any knowledge. He knew very few Jews. His mother remained more attached to Judaism than his father, and when Marx married a Christian girl in 1843 he quarreled with his mother about this and about money. When Marx wrote about the Jews in 1843–44, this quarrel gave a personal edge to his anti-Jewish prejudice, which otherwise was based on the common anti-Semitism of the café and the university, and on certain specific writings, such as Bauer's. Shorn of its Hegelian idealism, Marx's tract, "On the Jewish Question," had the same factual basis as Toussenel's philippic, published the following year, entitled *Les Juifs, rois de l'époque: histoire de la féodalité financière* ("The Jews, Kings of the Era: A History of Financial Feudalism")—the work which later inspired Drumont to write perhaps the most influential of all anti-Semitic books, *La France juive.*

I find it hard to believe that those who deny Marx's anti-Semitism can have read this essay, or at any rate progressed beyond the first part. As Wistrich has pointed out, the attempts by later Jewish socialists, like Rosa Luxemburg, to present it as a scientific demystification of the Jewish problem can only be sustained by deliberate misquotation or willful misunderstanding of what Marx wrote. In any case, the word "scientific" is absurdly misplaced since Marx wrote without any attempt at an objective inquiry.

The second part of Marx's essay is almost a classic anti-Semitic tract, based upon a fantasied Jewish archetype and a conspiracy to corrupt the world. Marx says he is concerned with "the real Jew: not the *sabbath Jew* . . . but the *everyday Jew*" (Marx's emphasis throughout). He asks: "What is the profane basis of Judaism? *Practical* need, *self-interest*. What is the worldly cult of the Jew? *Huckstering*. What is his worldly God? *Money*." This point is repeated again and again. What was "the basis of the Jewish religion? Practical need, egoism" and "the god of *practical need and self-interest* is *money*. Money is the jealous god of Israel, beside which no other god may exist. Money abases all the gods of mankind and changes them into commodities. . . . Money is the alienated essence of man's work and existence; this essence

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dominates him and he worships it. The god of the Jews has been secularized and has become the god of this world. The bill of exchange is the real god of the Jews."

The Jews, Marx maintained, had corrupted the Christians, indeed the whole world. Jews did not need emancipating since the Jew "has already emancipated himself in a Jewish fashion" by using the power of money. Marx quoted with approval Bauer's assertion that the Jew already "determines the fate of the whole [Austrian] empire by his financial power . . . [and] decides the destiny of Europe." Indeed, he adds, the Jew "by acquiring the power of money" has turned money itself into "a world power."

THERE are, needless to say, fundamental confusions in Marx's reckless analysis of the world's ills. He says that the characteristics of the Jew are to be explained "not by his religion, but rather by the human basis of his religion—practical need and egoism." Hence the problem is a cultural one. On the other hand, he seems to be arguing that, since the essence of the Jew is not his religion but his attitude to money, by abolishing property, society would automatically destroy the Jewish religion, and in so doing free not only the Jews but all mankind: "In emancipating itself from *hucksterism* and *money*, and thus from real and practical Judaism, our age would emancipate itself."

Marx's essay on the Jews thus contains, in embryonic form, the essence of his theory of human regeneration: by abolishing private property society would transform human relationships and thus the human personality. Marx's form of anti-Semitism was a dress rehearsal for Marxism itself. Later in the century, August Bebel would coin the phrase, much used by Lenin: "Anti-Semitism is the socialism of fools." Behind this revealing epigram lay the following crude argument, which might be paraphrased thus: We all know that Jewish middlemen, who never soil their hands with toil, exploit the poor workers and peasants. But only a fool blames the Jews alone. The mature man, the socialist, has grasped the point that the Jews are only the symptoms of the disease, not the disease itself. The disease is the religion of money, and its modern form is capitalism. Workers and peasants are exploited not just by the Jews but by the bourgeois-capitalist class as a whole—and it is that entire class, not only its Jewish element, which must be destroyed.

Thus understood, the militant socialism Marx adopted in the later 1840's can be seen as an expanded and transmuted form of his earlier anti-Semitism. The Jewish world-conspiracy theory is not so much abandoned as extended to include the entire bourgeois class. Marx retained the fundamental fallacy that the making of money through trade and finance is essentially a parasitical activity, but he now placed it, not on a basis of race or religion, but of class.

The refinement or enlargement does not improve the validity of the theory. It merely makes the theory more dangerous, if put into practice, because it expands its scope and multiplies the number of those to be treated as conspirators, and so victims. Marx is no longer concerned with specifically Jewish witches to be hunted, but with generalized human witches. The theory is still fundamentally irrational, but it has a more sophisticated appearance. To reverse Bebel's epigram, if anti-Semitism is the socialism of fools, socialism is the anti-Semitism of intellectuals. An intellectual like Lenin, who clearly perceived the irrationality of anti-Semitism, and would have been ashamed to be heard defending a pogrom, let alone conducting one, nevertheless fully accepted its spirit once the target was generalized into the capitalist class as a whole—and went on to conduct pogroms against the bourgeoisie on an infinitely greater scale, murdering hundreds of thousands not on the basis of individual guilt, but merely membership in a condemned group.

IT IS misleading to contrast the activist violence of Lenin with the theoretical abstractions of Marx, who seems to have imagined that the capitalist class would be eliminated by the painless process of historical determinism. Marxist theory cannot be divorced from the verbal violence with which Marx expressed it. Nor is it possible to make absolute distinctions between violence against a race and violence against a class—between genocide and class warfare. They were in fact confused in Marx's own mind. As he saw it, races, peoples, nations were subjected to the same Hegelian processes as classes. He often discussed with Engels the notion of inferior or superior nations or races, and of races in the process of decay and disappearance, what Engels called "dying nationalities." Engels liked to quote a saying of Hegel's that "residual fragments of peoples" always become "fanatical standard-bearers of counterrevolution." Thus you could have a reactionary people as well as a reactionary class—a thought which appealed strongly to Stalin as well as Hitler, and indeed to Mao Zedong too when he dealt, in 1950, with that reactionary little people, the Tibetans. Engels wrote in Marx's newspaper, the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*: "The next world war will result in the disappearance from the face of the earth not only of reactionary classes and dynasties, but also of entire reactionary peoples. And that, too, is a step forward." Thus Engels, who specifically repudiated political anti-Semitism in 1879, saw Marxism as a sufficient warrant for genocide as well as class warfare.

Equally important, I think, is that the emotional tone remained similar both in Marx's anti-Semitic essay and in his subsequent writings about the cap-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

italist class as a whole. The archetype Jew was replaced by the archetype capitalist, but the features of the caricature were essentially the same and the venom with which Marx portrayed them was, if anything, greater. Take, for instance, the presentation of Marx's capitalist monster in *Das Kapital* (Volume II, Part VII, Chapter 22, Section 3):

> Only insofar as the capitalist is personified capital has he a historical value; only as such has he that historical right to exist. . . . Fanatically bent upon the exploitation of value, he relentlessly drives human beings to production for production's sake. . . . Only as the personification of capital is the capitalist respectable. As such he shares with the miser the passion for wealth as wealth. But that which in the miser assumes the aspect of mania, is in the capitalist the effect of the social mechanism in which he is only a driving wheel . . . his actions are a mere function of the capital which, through his instrumentality, is endowed with will and consciousness, so that his own private consumption must be regarded by him as a robbery perpetrated on accumulation.

Could such a weird personification of inhumanity ever have existed? Did Marx actually believe in such a creature? But then, when had an anti-Semitic propagandist believed in the archetypal hate figure he presented as a living person? That Marx still, in his mind, saw the capitalist archetype as essentially the Jewish archetype is suggested to me by the footnote he added to this passage. It deals with the usurer, whom Marx terms "the old-fashioned but perennially renewed form of the capitalist." Marx knew that, in the minds of most of his readers, the usurer was the Jew—as Toussenel put it, the terms usurer and Jew are interchangeable. Most of the footnote consists of a violent quotation from Luther who, as Marx was well aware, was among the most furious anti-Semitic writers. A usurer, Marx quotes Luther as saying,

> is a double-died thief and murderer. . . . Whoever eats up, rots, and steals the nourishment of another, that man commits as great a murder (so far as in him lies) as he who starves a man or utterly undoes him. Such does a usurer, and sits there while safe on his stool when he ought rather to be hanging on the gallows, and be eaten by as many ravens as he has stolen guilders, if only there were so much flesh on him, that so many ravens could stick their beaks in and share it. . . . Therefore is there, on this earth, no greater enemy of man (after the Devil) than a gripe-money and usurer, for he wants to be God over all men . . . such a one would have the whole world perish of hunger and thirst, misery and want. . . . Usury is a great huge monster, like a werewolf. . . . And since we break on the wheel and behead highwaymen, murderers, and housebreakers, how much more ought we to break on the wheel and kill . . . hunt down, curse, and behead all usurers!

I find it suggestive that Marx should quote this brutal exhortation to kill from an anti-Semitic writer, in a work purporting to be scientific—suggestive, that is, both of Marx's own violence and of the emotional irrationality which expressed itself first as anti-Semitism and then as generalized anti-capitalism.

The origins of Marxism in anti-Semitic conspiracy theory can never be wholly erased. Whatever guise Marxism may take, it retains this stigma, like a mark of Cain; sometimes palimpsest, sometimes brazen. Marxism always was, and it remains, a theory and practice which will not accommodate the Jews as they are.

LENIN not only repudiated anti-Semitism but took steps to stamp it out. How then could such a tradition carry with it, uncured, indeed undiagnosed and untreated, the anti-Semitic virus? The answer is that the secularized or non-Jewish Jews who were among the principal architects of the Leninist state shared with Lenin a fallacy almost as egregious as the fallacies of traditional anti-Semitism, or the variety peddled by Marx in 1844. They did not see the Jews as a world conspiracy but went almost to the opposite extreme: they denied that Jews had any cultural particularity at all. The notion of Jewishness would simply disappear after the revolution. The Jew, and his *Doppelgänger* the anti-Semite, were transient phenomena to be erased by the ineluctable logic of history. Hence Jewish socialists were not entitled to their own Bund, or party. Still less were Jews, as a nation or race, entitled to their own nationality status in the socialist community, and least of all to their own Zionist state.

Most of these non-Jewish Jews, though socialists, knew nothing about the proletariat as it actually existed. Like Lenin, they had no direct experience of working-class society. They came from Poland and Russia but they had left the ghetto; they led the lives of students, café agitators, political activists in a middle-class or bohemian environment far from the Jewish masses. By denying the undoubted fact of the Jewish proletariat, of Jewish society, of Jewish culture, they made trouble inevitable. For facts that are denied by authority yet obstinately make their reappearance are liable to be treated as hostile or malevolent phenomena. Hence when, in the Soviet Union, Jewish religion and culture, and even Zionism itself, far from disappearing, persisted and sought to express themselves, they were interpreted by the ruling elite, above all by Stalin but to some degree by all his successors, as a conspiracy. Thus anti-Semitic conspiracy theory was revived, within the wider conspiracy theory of Marxism itself.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Stalin termed the new Jewish conspiracy "cosmopolitanism." He thus reunited two streams of anti-Semitism, which had diverged in Napoleonic times but now flowed together again. As we have noted, the crime of "rootlessness" was the oldest of all accusations hurled against the Jews, from Manetho to Marx. The socialist progeny of Voltaire saw the Jewish threat as a conspiracy of rich exploiters. But the French Revolution and empire, in provoking reactions among the traditionalist forces in Europe, brought into existence yet another variety of anti-Semitism.

Like all children of the Enlightenment, Napoleon sought a rational "solution" to the "Jewish problem." He liberated Jews just as he liberated nations. He also conceived the idea of convoking a "Grand Sanhedrin" in Paris in 1807 to help him solve the "problem." The idea was unfortunate because it did nothing for the Jews but set up terrifying vibrations among their conservative enemies. Traditional anti-Semitic conspiracy theory had been kept alive by the ecclesiastical Inquisitions of Spain and Rome. When they fell in the revolutionary convulsions, the torch was handed to the new and growing secret-police forces of the European empires, especially Austria and Russia. They saw all Jews as potential or actual partisans of Napoleon and took a close interest in covert Jewish activities. The idea of the Grand Sanhedrin fed their paranoia.

So, in addition to the radical anti-Semitic conspiracy theory of the type favored by Marx, there grew up a "reactionary" theory of Jewish elders meeting in secret to overthrow established society. The actual *Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion* were forged by the czarist secret police who also arranged for their publication in 1905. When Stalin took over Russia he inherited a country which had not only practiced anti-Semitism as systematic state policy from 1881 to 1917, but whose political police had deliberately fabricated the materials of anti-Semitism. The resumption of anti-Semitism in Soviet Russia from 1937 onward, culminating in the terrible years 1949–53, was not therefore surprising.

Stalinist anti-Semitism had much in common with the Nazi variety. Stalin's hatred of "cosmopolitanism" ran parallel with the Nazi distinction between culture, associated with the best qualities of the German race, and "civilization," which the Nazis associated with Jewish internationalism and the materialistic capitalism of the West. The Nazis hated big cities, huge factories, the impersonality of large-scale finance capitalism, which had no home and knew no frontiers; it "alienated" man from his own homeland. All these malign forces they attributed to the Jews. This is not very far from the Marx of 1843–44. Indeed, the Marxist and Nazi concepts of alienation, a source of anti-Semitism in both, are similar, and this is hardly surprising for each had its origin in Hegel.

HITLER regarded both Marxism and capitalism as Jewish conspiracies. Had not Werner Sombart, one of capitalism's defenders, "proved scientifically" in 1911 that the origins of capitalism were in all essentials Jewish? This book paid generous tribute to Marx's 1844 essay, which helped to inspire it. Yet Marx's notion of the Jewish attitude to money slowly infecting Christianity, then the whole of society, was akin to Hitler's nightmare of the "Jewish bacillus" getting a grip on the world, using both Bolshevism and international finance capital as its carriers. Hitler, a romantic who saw himself as an idealist and an anti-materialist, hated the capitalist system, though he was prepared to use it on his terms, just as Lenin, then Stalin, used state capitalism. Where the two forms of anti-Semitism differed was in the intensity of Hitler's paranoia and the central position the Jews occupied in his thought and strategy. That was what made the Holocaust possible. In Soviet demonology, by contrast, Jewish cosmopolitanism was only one of many enemies. But even there, from the end of 1948 onward, there are signs that it had begun to obsess Stalin, to the exclusion of other hostile fantasies. The "Doctors' Plot" of 1952–53, just before his timely death, suggests that his reign too—had he lived longer—might have culminated in a general assault on Soviet Jewry.

This episode reminds us that all totalitarian systems based on conspiracy theory are prone to anti-Semitism, the oldest conspiracy theory of all. It is latent in their ideology and is liable to become active without warning in moments of "crisis," real or imaginary. Socialism, both in its nationalist and its Marxist-Leninist form, cannot escape the deformation of its origins, which lie in a grotesquely oversimplified explanation of how capitalism originated and functions. Societies built upon irrational premises must be expected to act irrationally when they feel threatened. So no Jewish minority can ever be wholly safe in a non-democratic socialist society, especially one based on Marxist dogma, which itself evolved from a primitive anti-Semitic model.

Equally significant is the way in which Marxist conspiracy theory lends itself to the new and virulent anti-Zionism which is the contemporary expression of anti-Semitic irrationality. Hatred of Zionism fits neatly into Marxist-Leninist theory at two levels. Lenin, having denied Jewish particularism, and therefore the validity of Zionism, was bound to attack it once he seized power. At that time Zionism was by far the strongest element within Russian Jewry, with 1,200 local groups totaling over 300,000 members. From September 1, 1919 onward, Lenin used the Cheka (secret police) and the Yevsektsia (the Jewish section of the propaganda department of the Communist party) to destroy Zionism systematically. Its conspiratorial object, it was argued, was "to corrupt Jewish youth

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and throw them into the arms of the counterrevolutionary bourgeoisie in the interests of Anglo-French capitalism." Any Soviet Jew who asserted his essential Jewishness was thus a Zionist and an enemy of the state.

As Zionism was an affront to Marxist-Leninist logic, it followed that an actual Zionist state could only be an artificial creation promoted by the bourgeois powers to serve the interests of capitalism, and of its international superstructure, imperialism. At this second level, there was no difficulty in finding "evidence" for this new conspiracy theory, which might well have appealed strongly to Marx himself. For the Jews, it seemed, had a leading role in imperialism too! In 1900 the English economist J.A. Hobson published his book, *The War in South Africa, Its Causes and Effects*, which contained an entire chapter, "For Whom Are We Fighting?," proving that this imperialist war had been promoted by Jewish financial interests. Two years later he broadened his thesis in his famous work, *Imperialism: A Study*, which showed that international finance capital was behind the drive to colonize backward people all over the world. His chapter "Economic Parasites of Imperialism," the heart of his theory, contains this key passage:

> These great businesses—banking, brokering, bill discounting, loan floating, company promoting—form the central ganglion of international capitalism. United by the strongest bonds of organization, always in closest and quickest touch with one another, situated in the very heart of the business capital of every state, controlled, so far as Europe is concerned, chiefly by men of a single and peculiar race, who have behind them many centuries of financial experience, they are in a unique position to control the policy of nations. No great quick direction of capital is possible save by their consent and through their agency. Does anyone seriously suppose that a great war could be undertaken by any European state, or a great state loan subscribed, if the house of Rothschild and its connections set their face against it?

It was Hobson's book which formed the basis for Lenin's own economic theory of colonialism, set out in *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1916). This conspiracy-theory explanation of colonialism, derived from Hobson, not only became official Soviet doctrine but in time helped to shape the views of the ruling intelligentsia in large parts of the so-called Third World. In this irrational stew, the notion of the Zionist state as an aggressive local projection of "American imperialism" was a natural ingredient. In this area, Soviet and Third World conspiracy theory coincide perfectly.

Needless to say, the historical facts of Israel's creation reveal the theory as nonsense. The only explanation they do support might be termed "accident theory." Israel climbed into existence through a fortuitous window which briefly opened in history. In terms of *Realpolitik* it did not then seem in America's interests to promote a Zionist state, as Roosevelt in his last months was beginning to see. David Niles, FDR's pro-Zionist assistant in the White House, was probably right when he later testified: "There are serious doubts in my mind that Israel would have come into being if Roosevelt had lived." It was Harry S. Truman, with his need for Jewish swing-state votes in the forthcoming 1948 election, his distrust of those he termed "the striped-pants boys in the State Department," and above all his strong and simple sense of justice, who pushed the partition scheme through the United Nations and gave immediate *de-facto* recognition to the new state. The constituent elements of "American imperialism" were all hotly opposed. The State Department prophesied disaster for American interests. Max Thornburg of Cal-Tex, speaking on behalf of the U.S. oil industry, claimed that Truman had "extinguished" the "moral prestige of America." Echoing the views of the armed forces, Defense Secretary James V. Forrestal denounced the Jewish lobby which had been "permitted to influence our policy to the point where it could endanger our national security."

Even more destructive of the "imperialist" conspiracy theory of Zionism was the actual behavior of the Soviet Union. For tactical reasons, Stalin abandoned anti-Zionism, in practice though not in theory, between 1944 and the autumn of 1948. He seems to have thought that a socialist Israel would operate decisively against British and U.S. interests in the Middle East. At all events, Russia played a part in the creation of Israel second only to America's, as Andrei Gromyko survives to testify (if he would!), for it was he, as Deputy Foreign Minister, who cast the first major Soviet vote at the UN in favor of Israel's creation. Semyon Tsarapkin, head of the USSR's UN delegation, offered members of the Jewish Agency the toast, "To the future Jewish state," before voting for partition on October 13, 1947, and in the General Assembly the entire Soviet bloc followed suit on November 29. During the spring of 1948 Soviet policy was more pro-Israel than America's, and Soviet recognition of the new state, following America's by four hours, was not just *de facto* but *de jure*. Above all, it was the Czech government, on instructions from Moscow, which made Israel's physical survival possible by defying the UN arms embargo and turning over an entire military airfield to fly arms to Tel Aviv. Five months later Stalin reversed his policy, but by then Israel was established.

These facts demolish the myth of Israel as an imperialist creation. But when have facts been allowed to interfere with conspiracy theory, above all one which reflects an under-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lying anti-Semitic pattern? By the 1970's, the historical record of Israel's birth had long been buried by the Soviet Union and its satellites and conveniently forgotten by the Arab world. Leaders of many Third World countries, who systematically voted against Israel because its caricature fitted into their own paranoid theories of how the world works, were ignorant or uninterested. In the West, many intellectuals had come, without much inquiry, to accept Israel's conspiratorial role as an imperialist bridgehead. For, as noted, intellectuals have a weakness for such theories.

But those Western intellectuals who embrace anti-Zionism, whether on its merits or as a substitute for an anti-Semitism which is now unavowable in their own societies, find themselves in strange company. I will end by giving just one suggestive example. The history of hostility to the Jews over more than two millennia is rich in episodes of human cruelty and folly, but it contains few such disgraceful scenes as that enacted at the United Nations on the occasion of the state visit by President Idi Amin of Uganda, on October 1, 1975. By that date he was already notorious as a mass murderer of conspicuous savagery; he had not only dispatched some of his victims personally, but dismembered them and preserved parts of their anatomy for future consumption—the first refrigerator-cannibal. He had nevertheless been elected President of the Organization of African Unity, and in that capacity he was invited to address the UN General Assembly. His speech was a denunciation of what he called "the Zionist-American conspiracy" against the world, and he demanded not only the expulsion of Israel from the UN, but its "extinction." This blatant call for genocide was well-received by Marxist, Arab, and many other Third World delegations. The Assembly awarded him a standing ovation when he arrived, applauded him periodically throughout his speech, and again rose to its feet when he left. The next day the UN Secretary General and the President of the General Assembly gave a public dinner in his honor.

That is where the ineluctable logic of radical anti-Zionism leads. As such it is firmly rooted in irrational Marxist conspiracy theory.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Vietnam: The Revised Standard Version

Norman Podhoretz

WHEN a few years ago I undertook to write a book called *Why We Were in Vietnam*, I was a little startled to discover that there was hardly anyone around who still wanted to talk about Vietnam. Indeed, upon learning that I was working on Vietnam, most people would either change the subject after getting through the obligatory courtesies of a perfunctory question or two, or else they would shake their heads in commiseration: how could I bear to immerse myself in that sorry story again?

It was not that Vietnam had been forgotten. On the contrary. Even after the war ended in 1975, books and articles continued trickling out. To be sure, relatively little attention was paid to these postwar writings as compared with their wartime predecessors, but on the other hand, Macbeth could more easily have held his banquet without the ghost of Banquo than a discussion of American foreign policy or of the American character could have been conducted without an invocation of Vietnam. Still, as became vividly clear during the debate over Central America that flared up in the early days of the Reagan administration, invoking Vietnam was not the same thing as discussing, let alone reexamining, Vietnam.

It was in fact the curious role played by the invocation of Vietnam in this debate that impelled me to go back over the history of American involvement in the war. What was curious here was not the warning cry of "another Vietnam" raised by opponents of the administration's announced determination to prevent a Communist victory in El Salvador; that was to be expected. What did surprise me was that most supporters of the administration seemed to accept the right of the opposition to claim Vietnam as a vindication of its perspective on the moral and political issues involved.

Thus, those who believed in holding the line in El Salvador did not counter the invocation of Vietnam by showing how, if Vietnam was relevant to Central America at all, it proved the opposite of what the people who had brought it up were trying to establish. Instead, the administration and its supporters countered by saying that El Salvador was *not* Vietnam in the sense that local conditions there were less favorable to the guerrillas and more promising in general to the development of a successful resistance. No doubt this was true, but the resemblances between El Salvador and Vietnam were also striking. And these resemblances were so obviously damaging to the position of Reagan's opponents that it was only by a veritably Orwellian inversion that they were able to get away with pointing to Vietnam as their clinching argument.

For example, in El Salvador, as previously in Vietnam, a Communist-dominated guerrilla insurgency was trying to overthrow the government, and in each case the critics of American policy said that the insurgency was indigenous rather than manipulated or controlled from outside. Yet by the time the debate on El Salvador erupted, the North Vietnamese themselves had admitted that they had indeed created and directed the National Liberation Front (NLF) in the South. Or again, in El Salvador, as previously in Vietnam, there was much talk of a negotiated settlement through "power-sharing"—that is, of ending the presumably indigenous uprising by inviting the insurgents into a coalition government. Yet by the time this proposal was being advanced for El Salvador, the North Vietnamese had already conquered the South and refused to allow even their *Communist* allies, let alone any non-Communists, in the NLF a share in the power for which they had fought. Or again: in El Salvador, as previously in Vietnam, the American-supported government was under constant attack for abuses of human rights, and yet by the time demands for a cut-off of aid to El Salvador were being made, the experience of Vietnam had already demonstrated that the Communist alternative was much worse.

In other words, on every one of these crucial points of resemblance between Vietnam and El Salvador, the critics had been proved wrong where Vietnam was concerned. Nevertheless they blandly went on invoking Vietnam as though it provided unanswerable evidence for their position on El Salvador.

I think that something deeper was going on here

NORMAN PODHORETZ is the editor of COMMENTARY. His recent articles in these pages include "The State of World Jewry" (December 1983) and "Appeasement By Any Other Name" (July 1983).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

than the usual refusal to admit error. For the people who kept bringing Vietnam into the debate over El Salvador seemed innocently unaware of how dangerous it was to their own case. It was not that they had never heard of the boat people and the other blessings the victory of Communism had brought to Vietnam. All of them had heard of these things, and a fair number also knew that other elements of the old antiwar position had been exposed as illusions or outright lies. But for many people, the very word "Vietnam" had become so charged with meaning and affect that no amount of new information seemed able to defuse it. To lose "Vietnam" was to lose the organizing principle of all their ideas about America and its role in the world. And so they held on.

If we ask how this was possible, the answer is that some who heard the reports coming out of the new Vietnam held on by refusing to believe them; others held on by refusing to think about the implications of those reports; and still others held on by continuing to blame everything on the United States.

The first group was very small, but it was given a certain amount of weight by the presence within it of a few major stars of the old antiwar movement, most notably Noam Chomsky, William Kunstler, and Dave Dellinger. Yet in speaking, in Chomsky's words, of the "extreme unreliability" of the reports, these people were flying in the face of evidence that was so solid and so extensive that their denials proved an embarrassment even to many of their former allies in the antiwar movement. Chomsky, whose pieces on the war had once been a major feature of the *New York Review*'s coverage, quietly disappeared from its pages, while other intransigent apologists for the Hanoi regime were no longer lionized on the campuses and the television screens.

Radical critics of the war were, however, not the only ones who refused to be budged by new information from previously held positions. Take, for example, the case of Theodore Draper, who once seemed to me and many others one of the most responsible of the moderate critics. In a book entitled *Abuse of Power*, which appeared in 1967 (and parts of which had originally been published in Commentary), Draper devoted a good deal of energy to making fun of Washington's claim that the United States began bombing North Vietnam in 1965 only after Hanoi had decided to change the character of the war by sending in North Vietnamese regulars to reinforce the Vietcong guerrillas in the South who had been doing most of the fighting up to that point. According to the State Department, the regulars in question were units of the 325th Division of the North Vietnamese army, and Draper, picking out small inconsistencies in various official American statements concerning "The Mysterious 325th," as he sarcastically called it, also ridiculed the implication that "the North Vietnamese command had gone over to the so-called 'third stage' of Mao Tse-tung's famous formula, which called for a large-scale counteroffensive by the main armed forces." The upshot of Draper's analysis was that the Americans were inflating the presence of perhaps four or five hundred North Vietnamese regulars into an "invasion" in order to provide themselves with a pretext for bombing the North.

Eleven years later, in 1978, Guenter Lewy's *America in Vietnam* came out with new documentary evidence proving that the North Vietnamese had, as early as December 1963, decided to escalate by sending in regular units, and that about 5,800 men drawn from the "mysterious" 325th Division had indeed infiltrated the South by March 1965. Faced with this new evidence Draper simply refused to be convinced.

Now in a new book, *Vietnam: A History*,* Stanley Karnow produces additional evidence on this crucial issue (crucial because it became one of the first counts in the indictment charging the United States with lying about its conduct of the war). In interviews with North Vietnamese officials which he conducted in 1981, Karnow (himself a moderate critic of the war) discovered not only that North Vietnamese troops were sent South "long before Lyndon Johnson seriously considered the introduction of American battalions into Vietnam"; he also learned from General Tran Do, "one of North Vietnam's most distinguished soldiers," that by the fall of 1964, "The first complete North Vietnamese unit . . . had already departed for the South. . . ," and that this unit was none other than a regiment of the "mysterious" 325th.

As for the question of numbers, it turns out that even Lewy's estimate of 5,800 (let alone Draper's of four or five hundred) was too low. "Throughout 1964," Karnow was told by his North Vietnamese informants, "an estimated 10,000 North Vietnamese troops went South. . . ." This was done, moreover, for precisely the reason Draper contemptuously dismissed: the North Vietnamese *had* decided to shift (against Mao's advice, but that is another story) from a protracted guerrilla war to an offensive conventional war.

One might expect a responsible scholar who had been wrong on so important a point—a point bearing on the good faith of the United States government—to admit the error and perhaps even to begin rethinking his interpretation. But as of this writing, Draper has been no more open to Karnow's evidence than he was to Lewy's. Like the radicals who have held on to their idea of Vietnam by denying that the Communist victory has brought horrors to the people of Vietnam, Draper has held on to his interpretation of how the war developed by blinding himself to the inconvenient and embarrassing new facts which have come to light since 1975.

* Viking, 750 pp., $20.00.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

So far as the horrors are concerned, however, a more popular line of defense than denial has been to acknowledge the truth, and even to express anguish over the fate that has befallen the people of Vietnam, but then to go on talking about the world as though no such things had ever happened.

A striking case in point is Tom Wicker of the New York *Times*. While many veterans of the antiwar movement were triumphantly saying that the Communist conquest of South Vietnam had not led to the "bloodbath" which had been anticipated by supporters of American policy, Wicker had the decency and the honesty to admit that the "vast tide of human misery in Southeast Asia" unleashed by the Communist victory was the functional equivalent of a bloodbath. Yet regular readers of Wicker would be very hard-pressed to find any traces of that acknowledgment in his post-Vietnam columns on Central America (or indeed on any other aspect of American foreign policy). What has happened to Vietnam since the Communist victory casts no retrospective light for Wicker on the moral and political character of a war which was fought to prevent just such an outcome; nor does the experience of Vietnam say anything to Wicker about the morally and politically comparable situation in Central America today. He knows what has happened in Vietnam, but knowing it makes no difference.

This refusal to face up to the implications of the Communist victory in Vietnam often and quite naturally flows into a third defensive tactic, which is to blame the United States for what the Communists have done. The *locus classicus* of this tactic is *Sideshow* (1979), William Shawcross's book about Cambodia. According to Shawcross, not only were the Americans responsible for bringing the war to Cambodia; they were also responsible for embittering and enraging the Cambodian Communists (Khmer Rouge) who, upon coming to power, gave vent to this bitter rage by murdering several million of their own people.

Now, even if Shawcross's account were not marred at almost every point by errors of fact and tendentious manipulation of evidence,* this effort to shift the responsibility for a crime from those who committed it to those who were trying to prevent the criminals from coming into power should have been laughed out of court. Instead it was gratefully seized upon as a way of refuting (as Stanley Hoffmann put it in the *New York Review*) "All those who, somehow, believe that the sufferings inflicted on the Cambodian people, first by the Pol Pot regime, and now by the Vietnamese, retrospectively justify America's attempt to save Phnom Penh from the Reds."

The enthusiasm that greeted *Sideshow* stands in instructive contrast to the way Lewy's *America in Vietnam* had been received only a year earlier. This magisterial work did more than bring all the available facts together for the first time into a coherent account. It also provided a critical examination, solidly rooted in all the available documents and guided by a meticulous respect for what the evidence did and did not reveal, of the conventional wisdoms about the war. On such questions of fact as whether the American government was lying about the attack on our ships by the North Vietnamese in the Gulf of Tonkin in 1964; or whether the Vietcong was an instrument of the North Vietnamese; or which side began the escalation of the war in 1965; or whether the Tet offensive of 1968 was accurately reported by the American media; or why Nixon decided on the incursion into Cambodia in 1970; or how destructive the 1972 Christmas bombing of Hanoi actually was—on all these questions Lewy's researches turned up answers that very often made nonsense of what by the late 70's had come to be widely believed.

More startling still was his analysis of the charge that the United States had been guilty of "*officially condoned* illegal and grossly immoral conduct" (emphasis in original). Relying on previously classified records obtained through the Freedom of Information Act, as well as a host of other sources (including some of the same North Vietnamese documents that would later be confirmed by Karnow's interviews in Hanoi), Lewy came to the conclusion that the United States had *not* violated the laws of war in Vietnam and that its battlefield tactics had resulted in a *lower* level of civilian casualties than Korea.

If, then, Shawcross convicted the United States of crimes that nobody had previously charged it with, Lewy absolved the United States of crimes that almost everyone believed it had committed. Yet in spite of the fact that Shawcross's case rested on misrepresentations of the historical record and on a preposterous conception of responsibility, his book was—and continues to be—celebrated as an important contribution. By contrast, Lewy's book, whose scholarly reliability has nowhere been challenged and whose moral arguments have never been refuted, largely goes ignored. (It was not even mentioned in a New York *Times Magazine* article about recent scholarship on the war or in a similar survey later done by *Newsweek*, and though Karnow's bibliographical notes refer to *Sideshow* as "The comprehensive book on Cambodia during the Nixon years," there is no reference at all to Lewy's book—or, for that matter, to my own *Why We Were in Vietnam*, which was heavily influenced by Lewy.)

In spite of these ingenious efforts of denial, however, little by little the onslaught of evidence and sober argument began

* For precise documentation, see Peter W. Rodman's two articles, "Sideswipe" in the *American Spectator*, March 1981, and "Shawcross Swipes Again," in the *American Spectator*, July 1981. See also *Why We Were in Vietnam* (Touchstone/Simon & Schuster, paperback edition), pp. 207–09.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

undermining the idea that the United States and its South Vietnamese allies were the villains of the war while the Vietcong and the North Vietnamese Communists were the heroes. Holding on to Vietnam as a symbol of American malevolence and Communist virtue was therefore becoming increasingly difficult. For those whose intellectual and emotional investment in the antiwar movement's version of Vietnam was so great that giving it up would be tantamount to declaring political bankruptcy, a new defensive line needed to be drawn. That line has now been drawn by Stanley Karnow's book and reinforced by the PBS series entitled *Vietnam: A Television History*, of which Karnow himself was one of the "originators," on which he served as "chief correspondent," and to which his book is described as a "companion."

As it happens, there are a number of differences between the book and the television series. Indeed, having been led to believe from a massive and lavishly produced press kit that the series was a straightforward translation by Karnow of the book into a television documentary—with the relation between the two resembling, say, that of Kenneth Clark's book *Civilization* to the TV series of the same name—I was amazed to find that Karnow neither wrote any of the scripts nor acted as narrator and guide nor even ever appeared on camera.

Be that as it may, both the book and the series have been very widely praised as objective, fair-minded, and well-balanced, and while neither deserves these accolades, the series deserves them a good deal less than the book. For unlike Karnow, the people who wrote and produced several of the thirteen episodes are still trying to push the old version of the story, with the Communists cast in the role of heroes and the Americans and the South Vietnamese represented as villains.

This becomes immediately clear in the first two episodes which mainly deal with the Vietnamese struggle for independence against the French. These episodes are made up in large part of interviews and film footage taken from North Vietnam and taken, moreover, almost entirely at face value. The predictable result is a portrait of Ho Chi Minh as an almost saintly figure; his lieutenants, too—men like Pham Van Dong and General Vo Nguyen Giap, whose policies have brought nothing but war, destitution, and the terrors of totalitarianism to the people of Vietnam—are consistently presented in flattering poses and allowed self-serving interviews.

In general, the impression conveyed is that the Vietnamese Communists were and are people of courage, integrity, singleness of purpose, and selfless love of country. The South Vietnamese, by equally predictable contrast, are for the most part shown throughout the series as corrupt, unprincipled, incompetent, cruel, and selfish. We repeatedly hear them denounced as "puppets" by Pham Van Dong and other Communist leaders, and the way they are portrayed—wholly dependent on the United States and unable or unwilling to fight for themselves—lends tacit credence to this characterization. At the same time, the South Vietnamese are repeatedly being denounced on the screen by Americans who complain that they refused to institute various reforms urged upon them by Washington. Yet it never seems to occur to the authors of the series that the stubbornness of South Vietnam's leaders—first Ngo Dinh Diem and then Nguyen Van Thieu—makes nonsense of the charge that they were American puppets.

In several episodes, the attitude of the series toward the United States also bears traces of the anti-Americanism that was so prominent and so ugly a feature of the antiwar movement. The CIA is accused of responsibility for the flight of a million refugees from North to South after the Geneva Accords dividing the country had been signed in 1954 (when in fact most of these refugees were Catholics who needed no encouragement from the CIA or anyone else to flee from Communist rule); Lyndon Johnson is accused of caring more about domestic politics than about containing Communism (when in fact he sacrificed his Presidency to his belief in containment); American soldiers are shown weeping over what we are led to believe were atrocities (when in fact the responsibility, both moral and legal, for battlefield tactics that caused civilian casualties rested with an enemy who fought by hiding behind civilians); and the influence of Shawcross is all over the episode on the war in Cambodia.

Insidious editing tricks, amounting to outright lies, are also used to reinforce the anti-American appeal. "We're trying to do the reasonable thing," says the voice of Lyndon Johnson as images flash by of Marines blowing up a village, of mangled corpses, and of weeping children. (The lie here is that it was the Americans rather than the North Vietnamese who stood in the way of a negotiated settlement, when in truth the North Vietnamese, as they themselves now freely admit, never had any interest in compromise and were single-mindedly pursuing victory.) Or again: an American veteran of the war, talking about his experience, is shown saying that trying to kill someone "sends a real charge through you," and an American soldier is pictured wearing a helmet with the inscription "Kill a gook for God," while a chaplain leads a company in the field in the singing of "Onward Christian Soldiers." (Here the lie is that the American troops in Vietnam were bloodthirsty and mindlessly self-righteous, when in truth—as other episodes indicate—most of them had an ironic sense of themselves as "the unwilling, led by the unqualified, doing the unnecessary, for the ungrateful," which is what the much more characteristic helmet inscription "UUUU" stood for.) Or again: the Christmas 1972 bombing of Hanoi is mainly represented by footage of a hospital that had been hit, with the camera dwelling

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

almost lovingly on wounded children and outraged doctors. (The lie here is the suggestion that the bombing was indiscriminate, when in truth American pilots were threatened with court-martial if they deviated from prescribed bombing runs designed to minimize civilian casualties, with the result that such casualties were indeed kept to a minimum.)

In the eyes of this series, the only good thing about the United States was the antiwar movement. But the antiwar movement we actually see on the screen and hear about from the invisible narrator is as sanitized and idealized as the North Vietnamese. Though we get a glimpse of Jerry Rubin and another of Stokely Carmichael, in only one quick shot—a sign with a swastika carried by a protester—are we given any real indication that the movement consistently vilified the United States and the South Vietnamese, while either supporting the Vietcong and the North Vietnamese or lying about their character and purposes.* The antiwar movement we see here seems to be made up entirely of sober dissenters like George Ball and Mike Mansfield, anguished veterans whose eyes had been opened by the horrors of the war, and earnest young idealists being clubbed by the cops.

As Stephen J. Morris points out in a piece in the *Wall Street Journal*, however, most of this kind of thing is confined to the episodes which were done either by French or British producers. Those episodes that were produced by an American team under Richard Ellison at WGBH in Boston are in general neither pro-Communist nor anti-American. Moreover, because even the French- and British-made episodes were toned down as a result of criticism from outside academic consultants, the impression left by the series as a whole, and explicitly conveyed by the concluding episode (written and produced by Ellison himself), is more even-handed than some of the individual pieces. In that sense, it can be said that the series is a "companion" to Karnow's book, even though the book is on many points of detail as well as in its overall perspective better balanced and far more honest.

Thus, writing as a critic of American policy, Karnow nevertheless tries to go where the evidence leads even when it undermines the antiwar case. While recognizing, for example, that three times as many bombs were dropped on North Vietnam as the United States used in all of World War II, he also takes care to emphasize that these bombs did far less damage because they were directed only at military targets:

> The dikes along the Red River, whose destruction would have flooded the valley and killed hundreds of thousands of people, were never targeted. Nor were North Vietnam's cities subjected to the kind of "carpet bombing" that obliterated Dresden and Tokyo [in World War II]. Bombs devastated parts of North Vietnam, particularly the area above the seventeenth parallel, where troops and supplies were massed to move south, but Hanoi and Haiphong were hardly bruised.

Unlike the TV series, Karnow also gives a reasonably balanced account of the Christmas 1972 bombing. He mentions the "ghastly results" of bombs that went astray, such as the one that accidentally hit the hospital which is featured on the TV series. But he does not dwell disproportionately on these results, because he recognizes that the figures of civilian casualties (about 1,600 for both Hanoi and Haiphong) dispose of the charges of carpet or terror bombing; he knows that the reason these figures were so low was that "the B-52's were programmed to spare civilians, and they pinpointed their targets with extraordinary precision"; and he also recognizes that the North Vietnamese, so often represented as helpless, were well-enough equipped with surface-to-air-missiles to shoot down 26 U.S. aircraft, among them 15 B-52's. (What he fails to say is that these losses would have been lighter if the pilots had not been forbidden to deviate from their prescribed flight plans even to avoid being hit.)

If Karnow is not disposed to put the Americans in the worst possible light, or to lend easy credence to the anti-American lies of the old antiwar movement, neither is he inclined to whitewash the North Vietnamese and the Vietcong. One major example, to which I have already alluded, is his acknowledgment that North Vietnamese regulars were sent to the South not in response to American escalation, as has so often been claimed, but "months before the U.S. Marines splashed ashore at Danang in March 1965," and also before the bombing of the North began.

In addition, he confirms the contention earlier advanced by Lewy and the French journalist Jean Lacouture (though without citing them) that the Vietcong was an instrument of the North Vietnamese, thus dispelling what he himself calls "the myth, in which many Westerners then believed, that the Vietcong was essentially an indigenous and autonomous insurgent movement." And in his section on the Tet offensive, he minces no words about the atrocities the Communists committed in Hué where they "displayed unprecedented brutality, slaughtering minor government functionaries and other innocuous figures as well as harmless foreign doctors, schoolteachers, and missionaries."

Nor, finally, does he make any bones about the results of the Communist victory in Vietnam. He speaks of the "Vietnamese gulag" created by the Communists, of the destitution resulting from their management of the economy, of the boat people,

* Anyone who either doubts or has forgotten that the movement was shot through with such attitudes will find many examples, drawn from writers like Frances FitzGerald, Susan Sontag, Mary McCarthy, and many others, in *Why We Were in Vietnam*, pp. 85–105.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and of the transformation of the country into a Soviet dependency.

All this no doubt helps to account for the enthusiasm with which such hawkish reviewers as Harry G. Summers and Douglas Pike have greeted Karnow's book. But I would guess that the book owes its success in dovish circles to something else —to the general interpretation it offers of what happened in Vietnam and why.

This interpretation (which the TV series echoes) might be summarized as follows: The Vietnamese nationalist movement, led by Ho Chi Minh, was determined at all costs to achieve independence. After driving the French out, Ho Chi Minh was forced to accept a temporary division of his country and he then went to war through his surrogates the Vietcong to unify the nation under his rule. The United States, mistakenly seeing Ho as an instrument of international Communism, intervened, making the further mistake of believing that the increasing application of American power would persuade him to give up his goal. During the course of the war, many stupid and vicious things were done by both sides, and both countries, each in its own way, suffered considerable damage. In the end, Hanoi's determination proved greater than Washington's and the Americans, like the French before them, were driven out, opening the way at last for the unification of Vietnam under an indigenous nationalist regime. Ironically, however, victory was no kinder to Vietnam than defeat was to the United States. Vietnam was now unified and independent, but the people were repressed and impoverished. This, then, was "The War Nobody Won."

IN DEVELOPING this version of the story (which, incidentally, represents a return to the main lines of the standard version accepted during the war itself by liberal critics like David Halberstam), Karnow does not deny that Ho Chi Minh and his followers were Communists as well as nationalists. Yet he seems incapable of taking this fact seriously. At one point, he goes so far as to say that if not for "French intransigence [which] steered him toward violence," Ho might have become, "like Gandhi, an apostle of passive resistance"—this, of one of the more ruthless Leninists of our time. In a similar vein, Karnow repeatedly deplores the "antiquated Marxist ideology" that led the Vietnamese Communists to commit "blunders" and "errors" that a more "realistic" assessment of their own interests would have permitted them to avoid. In other words, Karnow cannot get it through his head that what Ho Chi Minh wanted, and what his followers have achieved, was not merely an independent Vietnam: it was a *Communist* Vietnam. Therefore it is absurd to say that nobody won the Vietnam war. The Communists won; and the hideous results—give or take a local variation or two—were similar to the results of Communist victories in all the other countries whose people have been cursed with such victories.

But what of the United States? The implication of Karnow's version of the story is that if only the United States had supported Ho Chi Minh instead of opposing him, all would have been well. As a nationalist, he would have been happy to lessen his dependence on the Soviet Union and China, and the fact that he was also a Communist need no more have stood in the way of American support for him than it had in the case of Tito (or than it later would in the case of Mao Zedong).

Just as Karnow fails to take Communism seriously as a factor in Ho Chi Minh's behavior, then, so he fails to take anti-Communism seriously as a factor in the foreign policy of the United States. For it was never merely Russian imperialism that the United States was trying to "contain" through the Marshall Plan, NATO, the Korean war, and then the Vietnam war. It was also the system of Communist totalitarianism that went along with the expansion of Soviet power and influence. To support Yugoslavia, a Communist country breaking away from Soviet domination, was one thing; but it would have been quite another to support a Communist faction fighting against non-Communist and anti-Communist rivals for control of a country which had not yet been drawn into the Soviet orbit.

Though there were a few people in the State Department and elsewhere who favored trying to coopt Ho Chi Minh (and Mao Zedong as well), the consensus in the United States—and it was a bipartisan consensus in which liberal Democrats were even more enthusiastic participants than conservative Republicans—rejected any such policy. Karnow himself quotes Dean Acheson, Harry Truman's Secretary of State, who once dismissed as "irrelevant" the question of whether Ho was "as much nationalist as Commie" because "all Stalinists in colonial areas are nationalists." On another occasion (not cited by Karnow), Acheson told the British Prime Minister Clement Attlee, who had suggested that a more sympathetic policy toward Communist China might encourage Mao to move in a Titoist direction, that the American people could not be expected to support an "interventionist" (i.e., anti-Communist) policy in Europe and an "isolationist" one in the Far East. Acheson's Republican successor, John Foster Dulles (though his behavior in office was much less bellicose than Acheson's and certainly more restrained than his own rhetoric), also regarded Ho Chi Minh as "an arm of Communist aggression." And so too did his Democratic successor Dean Rusk, not to mention the four Presidents of both parties (Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson) for whom these men all worked.

The point is that it is unhistorical to argue for an alternative policy in the past that had no chance of being adopted. Nor do subsequent

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

events prove, as is so often suggested, that the Americans were wrong about "international Communism." For China *was* subservient to the Soviet Union at least until the end of the 50's and Ho Chi Minh remained so to the end; moreover, "wars of national liberation" *were* encouraged and supported by the Chinese and the Soviets as a prudent way of expanding Communist power and influence in Third World countries like Vietnam. Those who ridicule the idea that there was a monolithic Communist movement directed from Moscow in this period are either being dishonest or do not know what they are talking about. Nor is it at all clear that the subsequent break between the Soviet Union and China, or between China and Vietnam, could have been hastened or manipulated by a different American policy.

YET if Karnow's book, and still more the TV series, are unhistorical in dealing with the spirit of the past, they are both exquisitely attuned to the spirit of the present. To interpret Vietnam as "The War Nobody Won" plays with perfect harmony into the pacifist attitudes that have become so widespread in the past few years; and so does all the gory combat footage running through the TV series. Not long ago the purpose of dwelling on such images would have been to expose the evils of the American intervention, and while (to repeat) some of that remains in some episodes, the main purpose now is to stress, in true pacifist style, the horrors of war itself.

Similarly, to interpret the American intervention as a mistake rather than as a crime is nicely consonant with an atmosphere in which patriotic feeling has been crowding out the anti-Americanism of the old antiwar movement. Finally, to locate this mistake in the American failure to understand that nationalism is a more powerful force than Communism fits perfectly with the increasingly fashionable idea that the United States should be supporting the guerrillas in El Salvador and the Sandinistas in Nicaragua as nationalists instead of opposing them as Communists linked with the Soviet Union through Cuba.

In short, at a moment when the old antiwar case has been losing its credibility, Karnow and his television colleagues have produced a kind of Revised Standard Version of the story that salvages Vietnam for the fall-back position, which is that American power ought to be used not to oppose Communism but to coopt it, not to make the world safe for democracy but to make it safe for "Titoism." Thanks to the Revised Standard Version, Vietnam, no longer useful as a symbol of American evil and Communist virtue, will now more and more be taken as a definitive demonstration of the stupidity of anti-Communism, the sanctity and power of nationalism, and the futility of resorting to force. No wonder so many people have moved from merely invoking Vietnam to talking happily about it again.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In Defense of Public Diplomacy

Carnes Lord

I

If opinion was ever mistress of the world, it would seem to be singularly so in the contemporary world. The global proliferation of modern means of communication has given masses of ordinary people an unprecedented access to information and ideas, while the spread of literacy and of education at all levels has profoundly altered social and political relationships both in advanced and in underdeveloped countries. Partly as a result, ideologies incorporating a more or less elaborate system of opinions continue to have a major role in forming the political understanding and allegiances of much of contemporary humanity.

Yet in spite of all this, the sway of opinion remains a phenomenon remarkably understudied and underappreciated in the West. This is true above all with respect to international affairs. Social scientists may acknowledge the growing importance of the media as a factor in American domestic politics; they rarely pay attention to the international media environment. And the students and practitioners of international relations remain preoccupied with the themes and instruments of traditional diplomacy.

It should not be surprising, then, if the revival of "public diplomacy" by the Reagan administration has stirred less than intense interest in political or academic circles in America. This is unfortunate, not only because of the intrinsic importance of the issues involved, but even more because of their significance for understanding the foreign policy and national strategy of the United States as it has taken shape under the Reagan Presidency.

What is "public diplomacy"? The term—of relatively recent coinage—is not altogether a happy one, but has the signal advantage of calling attention to the inadequacies of traditional diplomacy as an instrument of foreign policy in a world where many governments are weak or evanescent, or else uninterested in a genuine resolution of international disputes. As it has come to be used in the Reagan administration, public diplomacy encompasses not only informational and cultural activities, but all public or (in a broad sense) political aspects of foreign policy—speeches, trips, and other public appearances by the President and other senior officials, and the support and cultivation of political groups and forces abroad that may serve the long-term interests of the United States and the West generally. And because it has involved the doings and words of high officials, public diplomacy has inevitably tended to extend itself into the domestic arena as well. Though in no sense replacing the time-honored "public-affairs" function discharged by the White House and by individual government agencies, public diplomacy has been conceived as providing a focus and direction all too often lacking in public-affairs operations (which tend to be reactive, "damage-limiting," and oriented to the short term, their agenda fixed by the American media), as well as better coordination with international information and political activities and with overall policy.

The most radical departure of the Reagan administration, however, has been in the area of international political activities. In his speech to the British Parliament of June 8, 1982, the President sketched the broad outlines of a strategy of American assistance in "building the infrastructure of democracy" around the world. Inspired in part by the international activities of the "foundations" (*Stiftungen*) operated with public funds by the West German political parties, in part by the traditional international involvement of the American labor movement, the President's initiative aimed to provide or facilitate American support for the typical institutions of democracy—political parties, a free press, free labor unions, youth organizations, and the like—in areas of the world where they are nonexistent or weak. Although certain of these activities were at one time carried out covertly by the Central Intelligence Agency, and some have maintained a marginal presence in American diplomacy, the Reagan initiative amounts to a qualitative break with past practices and assumptions.

Carnes Lord has recently served on the staff of the National Security Council. His article, "The ABM Question," appeared in our May 1980 issue.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

II

THE elevation of public diplomacy to a position of major importance in American foreign policy reflects a fundamentally new attitude toward the role of opinion and ideas in international politics. This attitude derives in part from a reading of world political developments over the last decade, but in part also from an appreciation of the defects of certain of the characteristic assumptions of the American foreign-policy establishment and of the American political class generally.

As Alexis de Tocqueville observed a century and a half ago, Americans are an individualistic people whose basic outlook on the world was decisively shaped by the rationalism of Descartes and the 18th-century Enlightenment. Central to the Enlightenment project was a reorientation of political life away from "opinions" concerning intangible matters such as God or the next world and toward the individual or material "interests" of men in this world. While many of the Enlightenment thinkers had a healthy respect for the strength of opinions divorced from interests (Europe had after all just been convulsed by a century of religious warfare), they seem to have believed that a new politics based on the security of life, liberty, and property could permanently turn men away from the politics of ideological or religious struggle.

This vision has seemed—and still seems to many—on its way to realization in America, if not elsewhere in the world. Although they fought a bitter civil war over an ideological issue, Americans have tended to view politics primarily as an arena of competing yet ultimately reconcilable material interests. They have considered it a sign of the health of the American polity that its political parties do not resemble the "great parties" of Europe, whose principled conflicts have always threatened the civil order and frequently jeopardized international peace.

World War I and the Presidency of Woodrow Wilson represented an important turning point in the theory and practice of American democracy. On the one hand, the war itself, its increasingly ideological character, and—particularly—the appearance on both sides of a vicious and mendacious propaganda effort, raised many questions about the rationality of man in mass society and the future of democracy. On the other hand, Wilson's ideas concerning presidential leadership and the deficiencies of "interest-group" politics of the Madisonian variety decisively contributed to the rise of the ideological liberalism which has dominated American political thinking until only very recently.

The American experience during the decade of the 1930's, when liberalism elsewhere was hard-pressed to survive the challenge of totalitarian ideological movements of the Left and Right, seemed to confirm the basic soundness of the traditional American approach to politics, as modified by an overlay of Wilsonian progressivism. The emergence of the United States at the end of World War II as leader of the liberal democracies and a global military power was widely seen as heralding a new era in which a triumphant liberalism (with the United Nations as its key vehicle and guarantor) would insure international tranquillity for the indefinite future.

The Soviet Union quickly assumed in the early postwar period the proportions of a major threat to this millennium. The immediate result was a countermobilization of American liberalism in a political offensive against world Communism in its various incarnations both domestic and international. It was at this time that the United States Information Agency (USIA) was launched, that Radio Free Europe (RFE) and Radio Liberty (RL, originally Radio Liberation) were created by the CIA, and that covert funding was provided to moderate political parties in Western Europe as well as to a variety of intellectual and journalistic undertakings. With the experience of wartime propaganda and psychological operations still fresh, President Truman established a Psychological Strategy Board in the White House to coordinate government efforts in what was regarded as a critical arena of struggle.

In all of this, however, there was something less than met the eye. Entirely apart from the self-destruction of domestic anti-Communism at the hands of Senator McCarthy, the international activism of cold-war American liberalism was an anomaly which could not sustain itself against the weight of American political habits. The 1950's proved to be less the decade of cold war than the decade of the "end of ideology," as economic prosperity at home seemed to doom whatever hopes left-wing intellectuals continued to harbor for the radicalization of American politics, and at the same time lent plausibility to the notion that the global conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union would eventually be resolved by a peaceful convergence of Communism and liberal capitalism engineered by the internal dynamics of the process of modernization. It was similarly assumed that traditional regimes and practices in the Third World would be swept away in the course of things, and the adherence of these areas to the West insured, by a combination of economic development and the attendant spread of liberal political ideas and practices.

USIA or RFE-RL might indeed assist these processes; they were never thought to be critical to them. "Enlightenment" of the peoples with regard to their true interests was assumed to be a world-historical process which could be accelerated but not fundamentally altered by the purposeful action of governments. In this view, rarely articulated though it was, Americans revealed them-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

selves to be as captive to a notion of historical materialism as the Marxists—only more so.

The revived international activism of the Kennedy years cannot be taken as a renewal of the ideological struggle in any fundamental sense. Military and paramilitary force and massive economic aid were the preferred instruments in containing Communism in the 1960's. This strategy provided, of course, the formula for disaster in Vietnam, discrediting in the process the entire enterprise of cold-war liberalism. But the catechism of the limits of American power was the wrong lesson to draw from the Vietnam debacle. The real lesson of Vietnam was the limits of military and economic power not firmly guided—as Hanoi's plainly always was—by a political strategy anchored in the psychological and ideological dimension.

AMERICAN assumptions about international politics have changed little in more recent years. A close linkage between economic modernization and progress toward liberal political institutions is still widely accepted as axiomatic. Americans are still inclined to look on foreigners individually as being much like themselves, with fundamentally similar needs and interests that are immediately comprehensible across barriers of language, history, culture, and ideology. All this points to the continuing strength of the core assumptions of Enlightenment liberalism. If anything, developments in the ideology of liberalism over the last several decades—notably, the increased prominence of themes such as sensitivity or compassion—have only further reinforced such thinking. Americans tend to be very reluctant to believe that human beings, apart from a small minority of the psychologically disturbed, can be motivated in their political behavior by opinions or ideas alone.

The argument implicit in the foregoing account could be elaborated at length, but one point should be particularly underlined. While the "interest-group" model undoubtedly reflects the way many Americans continue to think about American politics, it has become increasingly remote from the reality. The sustained economic boom of the postwar period meant, not indeed the end of ideology, but a transformation of the American political scene in which the traditional economically-oriented interest groups lost much of their former importance. The spectacular expansion of education and of the "post-industrial" sectors of the economy beginning in the 1950's laid the groundwork for the emergence of a "new class" whose political opinions were shaped much less by narrow economic interests than by the ideology of progressive liberalism. This class, with its increasingly complete domination of education, the media, and the active cadres of the Democratic party, has been responsible for a general ideologization of American society which has little precedent in the history of the republic. Like Molière's bourgeois gentleman, who never knew that he was speaking prose, many Americans have come to think ideologically without realizing it.

III

DEVELOPMENTS of the last decade or so have strikingly revealed the inadequacy of traditional American assumptions about international affairs. Soviet Communism has manifestly failed to converge with the economic and political systems of the West, and Marxist-Leninist ideology has demonstrated surprising resilience as an operational tool both within and outside the Soviet sphere, in spite of its virtually total intellectual ossification.

Once it became clear that Communism was largely irrelevant to contemporary world problems and that it would not sweep triumphantly through Western Europe and the Third World, Americans have had great difficulty taking it seriously as an ideology. As a result, they have greatly underestimated its continuing ability to mobilize and harness political passions and to shape fundamental perceptions of the world, and have failed to grasp the extent to which the very irrationality of the ideology lends it a strong appeal, particularly among Western intellectuals seeking an exit from the spiritual deserts of contemporary positivism and historicism.

As for the role of Marxism-Leninism within the Soviet empire itself, the Soviets and their clients have thoroughly digested the lesson taught by Machiavelli to the founders of new political orders —that "the nature of peoples is variable: it is easy to persuade them of something, but difficult to keep them in that persuasion; thus things ought to be ordered in such a way that, when they no longer believe, they can be made to believe by force." Contrary to what is often assumed in the West, police measures can be very effective in preserving not only the façade but even the reality of belief. Lack of access to external sources of information and constant repetition of official views have a cumulative effect in forming basic categories and tendencies of thought which are to some extent independent of the will of the individuals involved.

But the most striking development of recent years has been the worldwide revival of religion, or more precisely of fundamentalist religious impulses. This development, wholly unanticipated as it was by the American intellectual and foreign-policy establishment, raises profound questions regarding the link between modernization and secularization, and poses a challenge of potentially major proportions both to the Communist world and to the West.

Most obvious, of course, is the resurgence of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Islam as a moral and political force in the Third World. The overthrow of the Shah of Iran in 1978 by a popular movement dominated by the Shi'ite clergy only brought into relief the Islamic awakening—a movement of extraordinary breadth and depth affecting not merely the Middle East but the entire community of Muslims from Mali to Indonesia—that had been set in motion by the oil embargo and the growth of Arab oil wealth after the Yom Kippur War. Though certainly encouraged by the political activity and financial support of Libya and Saudi Arabia, there can be little doubt that this awakening represents a spontaneous impulse of resistance against modernity in either its liberal or its Marxist interpretation. Whether this impulse can be translated into a coherent political ideology very much remains to be seen, though interesting efforts are currently under way to rethink in Islamic terms the social and economic problems posed by modernization.

More amorphous and harder to analyze in terms of its political implications, but possibly of ultimately greater importance for international politics, is the religious revival in the West and within the Communist world. The exhaustion of Marxism-Leninism as a source of spiritual inspiration—perhaps even more, the growing evidence of its compatibility with or active promotion of gross forms of moral and political corruption—has given a strong stimulus to religious belief and practice both in Eastern Europe and within the Soviet Union itself. In Poland, the Catholic Church virtually forms an integral part of the regime. In the hands of a Polish Pope who is also well versed in moral philosophy and the ideology of Marxism-Leninism, the Church seems once more on its way to becoming an independent ideological force in Eastern Europe and elsewhere. In East Germany, the regime recently astounded observers by mounting a major celebration of the five-hundredth anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther. In the Soviet Union, fundamentalist Protestant sects have undergone a phenomenal growth in recent years, Orthodoxy shows signs of stirring in connection with the continuing revival of Great Russian national feelings, and the specter of Islam haunts Soviet rule in the Caucasus (Sufi brotherhoods there constitute the only mass organized resistance to the regime) and Central Asia.

As for the West, the clearest development is the rise of fundamentalist Protestantism within the United States, in a form which in some respects directly challenges the long-standing assumptions of many Americans regarding the role of religion in politics. This movement was, and remains, of course, an important component of the conservative coalition which elected Ronald Reagan in 1980. Too often unrecognized, however, is the fact that the fundamentalist surge is by no means confined to the political Right. Evangelical Christians in America and Europe have proved at least as open to the appeal of liberal as of conservative political ideas.

In many ways the most significant development of recent years, though, has been the gradual convergence of an increasingly liberal Christian establishment with a secular Left that is increasingly infused with ersatz religious impulses and ideas. This working alliance of the religious establishment and the political Left is nowhere clearer than in the anti-nuclear movement. That the vision of the anti-nuclear activists has emotional roots going beyond the principle of self-preservation of classical liberalism should require little argument. At the same time, the support of the religious establishment for a concern which in traditional theological terms amounts to heresy can only be understood as a manifestation of the acute crisis of belief which continues to grip Western elites.

That a quasi-religious ideology of the Left could develop into an independent political force in the West is a possibility that seems decidedly less fantastic since the rise of the "Greens" in West Germany. A politico-religious movement in which "the fate of the earth" has replaced both God and the fate of the soul would seem a logical development for a Christianized West convinced of the death of God; and Tocqueville had long ago predicted that pantheism would become a characteristic mode of belief in democratic epochs. It is also important, however, not to lose sight of the specifically German roots of the Green phenomenon and associated political sentiments in West Germany. Martin Heidegger could speak in the 1930's of the 20th century as an age of "darkening" marked by the flight of the gods, the destruction of the human world (*Umwelt*, the contemporary German term for the environment), and the standardization of humanity by modern technology; for him, the "inner truth and greatness of National Socialism" lay in its resistance to the triumph of the spirit of technologized modernity as embodied in the United States and the Soviet Union, which held exhausted Europe in a "great pincers."

Yet if German romanticism has an apocalyptic vehemence peculiar to itself, similar currents of feeling are certainly in evidence throughout the West today. The extent to which they are capable of organized political expression is quite unclear at present; but their larger ideological impact is surely beyond dispute.

IV

It is apparent that recent developments in the ideological dimension of international politics fully justify increased attention to the way America communicates with the world. It is also clear that these developments will require significant adjustments in American policy and strategy. At the same time, there are formidable

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

obstacles in the way of a revitalized and reconstituted public-diplomacy effort.

The unfortunate use of the term "propaganda" to refer indiscriminately to American and Soviet information efforts, apart from blurring a moral difference that is as fundamental as the difference between the two societies, has served to obscure the considerable evolution that has taken place in American international-information programs, particularly over the last ten years. Mirroring changes in the American political climate and in American foreign policy, these programs have progressively shed the ideologically aggressive approach of the era of cold-war liberalism in favor of a nonconfrontational tone and greater emphasis on cultural affairs and on the reporting of news.

In 1973, Congress came close to eliminating all funding for RFE-RL after its CIA connection was exposed by Senator Clifford Case; and neither RFE-RL nor USIA enjoyed great favor in the executive branch during the Kissinger era, when public diplomacy was virtually foreclosed by a *Realpolitik*-style diplomacy, and the very existence of an émigré radio broadcasting to the Soviet Union and its satellites seemed to threaten the possibilities of détente. Under the Carter administration, USIA was given a new mandate to promote greater understanding of foreign peoples in the United States, and a new emphasis was placed on the Third World at the expense of coverage of East-West matters. At the same time, the policy, practices, and ideological outlook of these organizations came to be modeled increasingly on those of the American elite media.

Although there has always been significant bipartisan and liberal support for U.S. international-information efforts on Capitol Hill, congressional liberals tend to oppose these efforts if or to the extent that they are "propagandistic" or ideological in content and "shrill" in tone, insisting that they respect the standards of "professional journalism." Journalists have also taken up this cry, and shown themselves eager to defend colleagues in government whose work is "censored" by the authorities for not being in step with American policy.

Liberal distaste for official information programs was particularly evident in the recent extended congressional battle over authorizing legislation for Radio Martí. Liberal attempts to derail the administration's proposal for a new broadcasting station for Cuba led eventually to a compromise bill establishing a new Cuban service within the Voice of America, on the theory that VOA legislative guidelines mandating accuracy and objectivity would keep the effort within the pale of journalistic respectability. Some liberals would almost certainly prefer to jettison official information programs altogether in favor of purely apolitical cultural exchanges, scholarship grants to foreign students, and the like.

Lost in all this is any sense of a positive objective or strategy that could direct public-diplomacy programs. If the purpose is merely to execute a perfect imitation of the CBS Evening News, the question arises whether it would not make more sense to save the taxpayer the money and broadcast translations of Dan Rather scripts. If public diplomacy is to act as advertiser of record for the American way of life, it has to be asked whether the instruction of Soviet dissidents or African tribesmen in the cultural significance of Elvis Presley or beer-can collecting—to cite two actual VOA programs of the past—is likely to produce any effect other than incomprehension, ridicule, contempt, and confirmation of the worst stereotypes of America current in the world.

There is surely an element of disingenuousness in treating journalistic enterprises such as CBS News and the New York *Times* as models of ideological innocence. In fact, one does not have to look far to realize that liberal reservations about official information programs have a large political component. Such programs tend to be seen as vehicles, actual or potential, for promulgating essentially conservative ideas, and hence as a disruptive factor in liberal efforts to maintain a dominant role in the conduct of American foreign policy. Needless to say, liberal feelings on this score have intensified considerably under the Reagan administration.

Precisely because of the inescapably ideological nature of international information and political activities, the absence of a workable bipartisan consensus on these matters within the United States government and the American political class as a whole is an even more serious handicap than in other areas of foreign policy. Perfectly illustrative of the problem is the continuing dispute in Congress over another Reagan initiative, the proposed National Endowment for Democracy. In spite of the fact that the administration went to great pains from the beginning to obtain bipartisan participation and support in developing this proposal, partisan opposition to the Endowment has come from both ends of the political spectrum, owing to insuperable mutual suspicions concerning the likely eventual beneficiaries of its programs.

Although it is difficult to overestimate the hostility of many liberals in Congress to anything resembling a coherent and effective foreign policy, there would seem to be little reason in principle why a new bipartisan consensus cannot be forged in the area of public diplomacy. It is an area of little domestic political importance—if anything, support for it is politically popular, and intensely so among concentrated groups of ethnic voters who are as likely as not to support Democratic candidates. More importantly, there is considerable room for agreement on a common ideological strategy as well as on a common understanding of operating policy and practices.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

To take the latter issue first, there is no reason why liberals should not be persuadable of the inappropriateness of measuring the information efforts of the United States government by the yardstick of American journalism. The fact is that the American media operate on commercial principles, not as a public service; and American news reporting is shaped nearly as much as anything else by the requirement to sell newspapers or commercial airtime. This means that the selection and presentation of news and other information by the media are determined principally by a view of what Americans want, not by some abstract notion of accuracy and objectivity. Not to put too fine a point on it, the American media are wholly a product of the American marketplace and of American political culture. The standards by which they operate have little to do with the requirements of information programs intended for a wide variety of foreign audiences, all of them with intellectual levels and interests, cultural values and political outlooks that differ significantly from those of Americans. Precisely "professional journalists," let alone the makers of national policy, should acknowledge as much.

As for the concern that American information programs are or could be purveying "shrill propaganda," it is a canard. No one advocates the use of Soviet-style propaganda by the United States. In spite of periodic alarums raised against the right-wing exiles who are supposed to populate RFE-RL, anyone even minimally familiar with these radios knows that they have acquired over the years a distinguished reputation for scholarly analysis of the Communist world. For that matter, the level of their broadcasts generally equals and not infrequently surpasses in balance and sophistication—dare it be said?—the public-affairs programming of CBS News. It is universally recognized that nothing would so doom such programs to ineffectiveness as the hectoring or hortatory tone of classic Soviet propaganda. The same applies to the information programs of USIA.

For many, however, the issue is less the tone than the fact of propaganda—that is, the very existence of an official information effort that touches on controversial political and ideological topics. This distrust of propaganda as such seems to reflect firmly rooted (if not always consistent) American tendencies. The fundamental tendency is to see propaganda, or political speech altogether, as an affront to the spirit of rational individualism—to the democratic presumption that everyone can and should make up his own mind about the important issues of the day. A more extreme version of this holds that a liberal state should be ideologically as well as religiously neutral, and hence that it is illegitimate for the American government to promulgate any "values"—substantive interpretations of political principles or of the world generally—for any purpose whatever. This view is buttressed by American skepticism of commercial advertising, coupled with a belief in the vulnerability of mass opinion to more or less subtle manipulation.

Congressional sensitivity to all this has led to special legislation severely restricting dissemination of USIA material in the United States. Internationally, congressional and liberal critics have sometimes acted as if it were enough to provide—on the model (if not necessarily the reality) of domestic public-affairs efforts—simply "factual" information, the apparent assumption being that if only people have the facts, the values will take care of themselves.

This view is as inadequate as the distinction on which it is based. All facts must be selected and organized; this can only be done with reference to values of significance for human life. In general, people are interested in facts only within a larger context of values. To attempt to present the facts and only the facts, while eschewing discussion of the controversies of value surrounding them, is ludicrous and self-defeating. There are many societies where forthright presentation of an ideological viewpoint is admired and expected, and its absence interpreted as weakness. Particularly when the societies in question are very different from our own, it is essential that we be as explicit as possible concerning fundamental Western principles as well as the assumptions and background of all factual reportage.

This is by no means to dismiss all concern over the morality of propaganda. It is only to argue that the concern has been inflated out of all proportion owing to factors internal to the political culture of democracy. The fact is that America and the West do not need to resort to the tricks of totalitarian propaganda (or of commercial advertising), because the case for democracy is intrinsically superior to the case for the alternatives to it. The point is nicely stated by Aristotle in his *Rhetoric*—the oldest and still probably the best treatise on this entire subject: "The things that are truer and better are more susceptible to reasoned argument and more persuasive, generally speaking."

It should be added that there is no reason for American information programs to reflect a single political or ideological line. Indeed, as it is one of this country's strengths that it can abide political controversy without fear of encouraging anarchy or revolution, there is every reason to demonstrate this process to foreigners, while at the same time recognizing the misinterpretations to which it is sometimes subject. How to define the boundaries of respectable opinion on any given issue will always pose delicate problems; these boundaries could well differ as between an American and a foreign audience, as well as among particular foreign publics. Nevertheless, the point remains valid and significant. An intelligent policy of this kind

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

can reduce to manageable proportions the liberal-conservative frictions that are bound to affect any ideologically ambitious public-diplomacy effort.

V

BEHIND the fear of "propaganda," however, lie two concerns of a strategic order regarding public diplomacy that are not peculiar to liberals. To a very considerable degree, these concerns are shared by the American foreign-policy establishment as a whole. One is the feeling that public diplomacy is an intrusive, not easily controllable, and fundamentally unnecessary instrument which only obstructs what is seen as the central business of foreign policy—the creation of an international climate congenial to negotiation, and the actual process of negotiation. The other is the strong doubt that the promotion of American political ideas and practices abroad is in fact in the real interests of American policy.

The history of American information programs has been in large measure the story of the struggle between traditional diplomacy and the spirit of journalism. Diplomats are understandably reluctant to see relations with particular countries jeopardized by the purveying of information that serves little visible purpose; journalists are understandably concerned to preserve the credibility of the overall information effort. Too often, however, both sides in this dispute have tended to lose sight of the larger strategic goals that public diplomacy should serve.

The case varies greatly, of course, for different countries. It is certainly possible to imagine circumstances where a clumsy or ill-timed broadcast might touch off a political crisis in a country with a weak and unpopular government heavily dependent on American support. On the other hand, the idea that an aggressive information effort significantly damages relations with Communist countries is simply unsustainable, and amounts to little short of appeasement in the face of the extreme (if admittedly not complete) reluctance of such regimes to moderate their own ideological attacks against the West. The fact is that Communist governments will negotiate with the West whenever it suits their interests, regardless of the invective level of the moment. By manifesting political resolve, a tough public line if anything only serves to strengthen the hand of our negotiators—a maxim of general application which unfortunately seems little heeded in today's State Department.

Yet there is more to American national strategy than the negotiation of agreements. An aggressive public diplomacy demonstrates American self-confidence and political will to allies, friends, and the undecided, and to the Soviets and the international Left it shows that the United States has at last begun to take seriously a dimension of strategic competition which they have long had to themselves. Moreover, it imposes added costs and constraints on Soviet repression at home, as well as threatening the grip of the Soviet Union on critical components of its global empire. In so doing, it contributes to our ability to deter or moderate Soviet international adventurism.

HARDER to handle is the objection to promoting American ideals around the world. Indeed, this brings us to what is in many ways the crux of the matter. It is useless to deny that Americans have in the past frequently harbored utterly unrealistic expectations as to the prospects for liberal democracy in the Third World, or that these expectations have created difficulties for the conduct of a sensible American foreign policy. As indicated above, Americans have often been slow to acknowledge the fundamental differences in culture and historical experience which limit the applicability of the American model elsewhere in the world. Yet this does not mean one is necessarily driven to an extreme version of Western exceptionalism or cultural relativism. As Peter L. Berger has recently argued,* it means that careful discrimination is necessary between those elements of American or Western liberal democracy which are relatively exceptional and those which are of more universal applicability.

In the area of political practice, the critical question is the extent to which democratic political institutions can be grafted onto societies that are less developed economically and socially than the West and lack cultural traditions supportive of political freedom and participation. The generally accepted view in this country, to state it again, is that the key obstacle to democratic politics is economic underdevelopment and its social concomitants. This view is unable to account for the case of premodern democracies like Athens or the Swiss cantons, which arose in poor, agriculturally-based societies; and it does not account very well for modern cases either of democratic success (India) or of democratic failure (Argentina or Chile).

It would seem, rather, that political culture is the key factor supporting or limiting democratic development. Political culture is the amalgam of customs, beliefs, political opinions and practices, ideologies, and styles of thought that constitutes the politically relevant way of life of a society. It is made up of disparate and not infrequently contradictory elements, differing substantially in their strength and relative weight. An approach to democratic development that stresses the importance of political culture can in some cases be more optimistic about the prospects of democracy than the alternative approach. At the same time, it serves to moderate expectations of the full-blown implementation of a democratic polity once a

* "Democracy for Everyone?," COMMENTARY, September 1983.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

society reaches a certain median income level, recognizes that throwing money at such problems will not solve them, and remains sensitive to cultural diversity.

This is precisely the approach marked out by the President in his London speech of last year in which he pledged assistance in developing not democracy simply but "the infrastructure of democracy," which he described as "the system of a free press, unions, political parties, universities—which allows a people to choose their own way, to develop their own culture, to reconcile their own differences through peaceful means." The "infrastructure of democracy" is made up of those mediating structures or institutions, whether public or private, which connect the individual to the state, develop habits of political participation and responsibility, and form a democratic political outlook—that is to say, which create a political culture of democracy even in the absence of democratic political institutions.

This approach is intended to avoid directly challenging the legitimacy of existing political institutions in the Third World. It recognizes that democratic political institutions are most likely to endure if they emerge from an indigenous development rather than if they are imposed under pressure from the United States or under conditions of internal political turmoil or insurgency. And it recognizes the legitimacy of a variety of institutional solutions to the problems which democracy poses in different cultural and political contexts.

In the area of political opinions and ideas, it is necessary to strike a balance between the universalist premises of liberal democracy and the indifference or hostility to important elements of democratic or Western political culture that is widespread in the Third World (and to an important degree among the populations of Communist states). Particularly in view of the resurgence of traditionalism and of fundamentalist religious impulses, it is essential that the United States be able to present itself, and liberal democracy generally, as an ally of tradition and religion. To do this will plainly require a significant shift in the substance as well as the emphasis of American public-diplomacy programs.

Accustomed as Americans now are to couching all political issues in terms of individual rights and entitlements, they find it difficult to realize how distasteful and threatening such a view of political life is for the great majority living in non-Western societies today. Yet Americans have a unique history of activity in private associations of all kinds (including religious and eleemosynary associations), as well as in local government, that runs wholly counter to the stereotype of ruthless individualism with which they are routinely taxed. This history could be highlighted. As Peter Berger has shown, a convincing case can be made for democracy as providing institutional and political safeguards for the traditional structures which have served as the focus of communal life in the Third World—and as the chief protection of individuals from the arbitrary action of the state. It is also essential that treatment of human-rights questions and of Communism and its works lay particular stress on the moral dimension of these issues.

It is undeniable that such a strategy will require greater attention to themes and arguments associated with American conservatism. At the same time, values such as community, family, and justice are by no means a preserve of the Right; indeed, they are likely to be significantly more congenial to certain kinds of liberals than to certain kinds of conservatives. To this extent, the strategy in question would not appear to be doomed in advance by the fissures of domestic American politics.

VI

The most difficult task facing American public diplomacy is not in the Third World or in the Communist sphere, however, but in the West. It is here that official information efforts tend to be least effective; and it is here that domestic political sensitivities are most likely to become engaged. For the problems American foreign policy is encountering in Western Europe today are caused principally by political forces that until recently have been generally friendly to the American presence and global role—and that have a marked and increasing affinity with the ideology of contemporary American liberalism. If the United States could be said to have had a public-diplomacy strategy in Europe in the past, it was the strategy of alliance with the democratic Left against domestic and international Communism, as exemplified in the history of CIA support for labor unions and social-democratic parties in a number of European countries in the immediate postwar years.

Such a strategy ceased to be viable with the general shift to the Left in European political culture that has occurred over the last several decades, and the growing susceptibility of the social-democratic parties to neutralist and anti-American impulses. Yet it is far from clear what might replace it. Particularly given the conspicuous role of essentially apolitical movements like the Greens, it seems doubtful that ideological counterargument by itself can accomplish much. The Soviets seem to have long since concluded that crude manipulation of European fears is a more effective tactic than preaching the virtues of Marxism-Leninism. Indeed, the European scene today strikingly confirms the prediction made thirty years ago by the sociologist Hans Speier: "The future of propaganda to foreign masses may belong to threats

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and speechless horror rather than to ideologies in an epoch in which at moments of greatest turbulence the masses do not act but merely suffer."

It is difficult to visualize how the United States could in any way compete with the emotional appeal of the Western anti-nuclear movement, or with the cynicism of the Soviets in their efforts to enlist the moral energies of that movement. At the same time, it is not difficult to identify in general terms what is needed to address the root causes of the disaffection of much of European youth and the European political elite with America and the West. It is a reaffirmation and revitalization of belief in liberal democracy as a political system and a way of life that is morally superior to the Eastern alternative—or to any alternative that is likely to be realizable in the conditions of modern life. But this is something that will come, if it comes, from within Europe and Europeans, and not primarily through the agency of the United States government. Nevertheless, there remains much that can be done to encourage and facilitate private efforts in this direction.

With respect to Europe as well as the world generally, what is wanted is not an undifferentiated, still less a shrill, ideological crusade. What is wanted is a strategy for presenting the case for liberal democracy in a manner which engages the understanding and respect, if not the active support, of a variety of peoples and groups who do not share or who have come to doubt its fundamental premises. Such a strategy is plainly ambitious. For it to succeed, a degree of domestic consensus will be necessary which can scarcely be said to exist at the present time. The creation of such a consensus poses nearly as much of a challenge to American conservatives as to American liberals; but of neither does it require the impossible.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Phenomenal Life of Sir Moses Montefiore

Chaim Raphael

ANYONE famous who lives to be a hundred acquires an extra bonus of esteem; and this was the experience of the most famous Jew of the 19th century, the English philanthropist Sir Moses Montefiore, whose double centenary is being celebrated this year. Montefiore was regarded with almost mystical awe by Jews all over the world when he reached his hundredth birthday on October 24, 1884. When he died nine months later, in July 1885, the memory that survived, especially in the Jewish heartland of Russia, was of a "nobleman" who had devoted his life to the welfare and freedom of his people. "Ordinary" Jewish leaders had been common enough: in every area one could find a *shtadlan*, a rich Jew with access to the government and ready to intercede in behalf of his fellow Jews. But Montefiore was different: he was *shtadlan* for the Jews of the whole world.

It was not that he was richer than anybody else; the Rothschilds were the symbols *par excellence* of such wealth. Nor had he set in motion some great philanthropic program on the scale of the vast benefactions that flowed in the 19th century from Baron de Hirsch. What came from Montefiore was something more distinguished than this, however hard to define. His ability to confront the mightiest rulers of the world seemed to put him beyond ordinary ken. Yet at the same time people felt, and correctly, that he was basically a simple Jew, firm in his conviction that the verities of the Jewish faith were the verities of man's existence on earth.

All this was embedded in the myth that sprung up around him, expressing, inevitably, the time and place in which he lived. How symbolic it was that his long life came to an end when it did. As a leader, he epitomized the piety and optimism of the Victorian age. His death in the mid-1880's was a cut-off point at which Jewish leadership—and the Jews being led—began to enter a new world. One need only recall that it was in 1881, when Montefiore was ninety-seven, that pogroms on an unprecedented scale broke out in Russia. These were a very large factor in the massive migration of East European Jews to the West, leading to the creation of a major Jewish community in the United States. And 1881 was also the year in which the *Hovevei Zion* (Lovers of Zion) made their first decisive move to launch pioneering work on the soil of the Holy Land. It is characteristic of the legend that had grown up around Montefiore that the first major congress of *Hovevei Zion*, held at Kattowicz in 1884, bore his name and was timed to open, in his honor, on his hundredth birthday. But neither he nor anybody else at that time could have foreseen, except in fantasy, that an independent Jewish state would be created in the century following, or that bringing this about would require, and result in, a revolution in Jewish leadership.

On broader historical grounds, it was at the end of his life that signs first emerged that political emancipation in Europe would not necessarily lead to a steady improvement in the Jewish condition of the kind that Montefiore the Victorian took for granted. He had believed that his policy of "smoothing things out" (as he called it) through direct negotiations with people at the top would set the Jews on the road to freedom, even in the backward lands of Eastern Europe. The idea that Jews might face more intense rejection, especially in civilized countries like France (as over Dreyfus) and Germany, would have come as a great shock to him. To be sure, England continued for the most part to express the liberal attitude toward Jews that Montefiore had found so supportive to his work elsewhere in the world. But this was now to be a less significant factor, for after Montefiore's day England began to lose its preeminence, another change that he would have found hard to envisage.

Montefiore's life covered a magic period in which a Jew who spoke for the Jewish elite in England was able to appear everywhere in the world with England's power behind him. The story of his exciting missions abroad, in the care everywhere of British ambassadors and the Royal Navy, is entrancing. Yet there is more to the story, which is given in his voluminous diaries,* than the charm of a period piece. Jewish leaders in later years had to deal with new situations in new ways; but the positive outlook that motivated Montefiore in *his* time rested on ideas and feelings that are not limited in their validity to the Victorian age. Montefiore was deeply pious, in terms of the pieties of the prayer book. He was also a Sephardi Jew, and expressed the unique form of pride that flowed from the sojourn of the Jews in

CHAIM RAPHAEL *is the author of many books on Jewish life and culture, including* Encounters with the Jewish People *and* The Springs of Jewish Life.

* *The Diaries of Sir Moses and Lady Montefiore*, an edited summary by his long-term companion Dr. Louis Loewe of 85 handwritten diaries by Sir Moses and some journals by his wife, was published in 1890 and reissued in facsimile in 1983 by the Jewish Historical Society of England and the (English) Jewish Museum. A cookbook by Lady Montefiore, which she published in 1846 under the title *The Jewish Manual: Edited by A Lady*, was also reissued in facsimile in 1983 by Nightingale Books (New York).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Spain and Portugal centuries earlier. In 19th-century England, it was not difficult to unite this with the self-confidence and love of tradition so natural to the society in which he moved. But Jewish pride has a wider base than this; and behind Montefiore's confidence, which often carried with it some strains of Victorian pomposity, there were principles that can be usefully adduced even in the changed circumstances in which we now live.

LIKE many Jewish spokesmen today, particularly in the United States, Montefiore was independently—though not fabulously—rich; and his wealth (again like theirs) had been created through hard work in his early years during a period of his country's extraordinary economic expansion.

The Jewish community in England in Montefiore's day was small in number (around 20,000 in London in 1850), and had been stable in size, though rising steadily in social position, since the beginning of the century. The basis of this community was the settlement in England of a few Sephardi families in the second half of the 17th century, the first Jews to be acknowledged as resident in England since their expulsion by royal decree in 1290.* These new settlers, who had links with Sephardi Jews in Holland and elsewhere (mostly Marranos who had fled from the Inquisition), began to be joined in the 18th century by Ashkenazi Jews with similar financial expertise and connections. By the end of the century all were well placed for success when England launched its vast colonial and industrial expansion. In organizing loans and supplies for the Napoleonic wars at the beginning of the 19th century, they had become a small but indispensable element in the City, with free access —though in a special way—to government and high society.

The Ashkenazi element in this tightly knit group was now particularly important. The anchor man was Levy Barent Cohen, who had arrived in London from Amersfoort (Holland) in the third quarter of the 18th century, and whose descendants have graced British life in every field of banking, industry, law, and politics for two hundred years. Among other Ashkenazim, two Goldsmid brothers, whose father had settled in England in the middle of the 18th century, achieved fame by stealing much of the thunder of the Sephardi loan-bankers. Nathan Mayer Rothschild, founder of the English branch of the great German family, began to operate in London only at the beginning of the 19th century; but within a few years he was the outstanding government financier, apart from his other interests.

Montefiore, due to emerge as the accepted leader of the Jews of England, was in a position, through family connections, to draw on the rising Ashkenazi element, as well as on the old Sephardi background which meant so much to him. His family had come to England from Italy in the 18th century, and his father had intensified the Sephardi connection by marrying the daughter of Abraham Mocatta, the outstanding Sephardi figure in the City whose ancestor had settled in England in the 1670's. Among other things, Mocatta was linked with the Goldsmids as bullion brokers. (Mocatta & Goldsmid are still world leaders in this field.) With the help of his Mocatta uncle, Montefiore was thus well launched in the City. It was no disadvantage, also, that he then married one of the daughters of the great Levy Barent Cohen. Rothschild had already married another of Cohen's daughters.

These intermarriages within the Cousinhood—to use Chaim Bermant's term for the great English Jewish families—were endless in their ramifications; but they by no means guaranteed a golden life. The history of the time is full of stories of members of the Cousinhood who fell by the wayside, or disappeared in failed adventures to India or the Caribbean. This did not happen, of course, to young Moses Montefiore, who joined skill and character to good fortune. To begin with, we hear of years of hard work; but as a brother-in-law of Rothschild and linked to the Mocattas and many other well-established City men, he soon had a strong financial base. For a time, he worked as a stockbroker, making the most of his connections. In some instances he joined with Rothschild in financing government, as when the two of them floated a loan of £15 million in 1835 through which the government was able to facilitate the emancipation of all slaves still remaining in British territory. More generally, he was a director or chairman of a number of major businesses—insurance, gas lighting, railways, banks—all destined to expand enormously in the 19th century.

IN ALL this Montefiore seemed a typical Victorian worthy; but suddenly, at the age of forty-two, he gave up all routine business work to dedicate himself for the rest of his life—almost sixty years—to the cause of his people. His devotion to Jewish affairs at home had already been expressed through serving in various offices in the synagogue (as all his City colleagues did at that time) and through becoming an active member—and then president for nearly forty years—of the Jewish representative body, the Board of Deputies of British Jews. But while he took all this very seriously, what riveted his attention was the condition of Jews overseas, and in particular the Jews of the Holy Land. Here, he operated on a principle more compelling, and historically much more significant, than that of merely extending help to the poor. To Montefiore, to be true to one's faith was to accept—as in the wording of the Bible and the prayer book—the full force of the unique relationship between God and the Jewish people. The Holy Land was the primary focus of this miraculous relationship, and to work for Jews in the Holy Land was therefore a supreme act of holiness.

It is ironic to recognize that in this profoundly important respect Sir Moses Montefiore, Baronet, friend of Queen Victoria, imposing (6 feet 3 inches tall), rich and full of honors, was on an equal level of thought and faith with the fanati-

* The status of the Jews was undefined until the 19th century. Oliver Cromwell had considered reversing the expulsion order, but no decision had been taken.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cally Orthodox Jews of Jerusalem, stooped, bearded, and otherworldly, who then as now were absorbed in prayer and in their relation to God. They were not more observant than he. Every prayer ritual, every feast or fast, was rigorously followed by him. If he was served on gold plate at princely receptions, he was meticulously kosher (after his early, more carefree days) in what he ate from the plate. The entourage of carriages with which he crossed the continent of Europe included among the passengers his own *shochet* (ritual slaughterer), together with his servants and his wife Judith's personal maid. If he was not able to participate with the rabbis and their pupils in the study of the Talmud, he was completely at one with them in their literal conception of God and His universe. The thoughts and prayers in his diaries illustrate this, often at inordinate length.

As a guide to action, Montefiore's strong simple faith made him invulnerable, and there can be no doubt that he was completely fulfilled by the endless practical missions he undertook; the renown that grew around him made him feel, justly, that he had given his life a wonderful shape of service. His numerous political missions all over Europe generated universal fame, starting with his fight against the ghastly blood libel in Damascus in 1840, when a number of Jews were forced to "confess," under torture, that they had murdered a Christian to use his blood for Passover rituals, and 63 children were arrested to force their mothers to reveal the hiding place of the blood. On this and other subsequent missions Montefiore confronted the rulers of the world—the Sultan of Turkey, the kings of Europe, the Czar himself. All this gave him a sense, though it was really an illusion, of power. Certainly the Jews of Eastern Europe loved it, thronging the streets to see their savior, as they did later with Herzl. But if Montefiore himself enjoyed the feeling, he was really moved much more deeply by the mysterious effect on him of his seven visits to the Holy Land.

In 1827, armed with introductions to governors, ambassadors, and admirals along the journey, Montefiore and Judith set off on the first of these visits. They traveled in their own carriages via Calais, Florence, and Rome to Naples, and thence to Malta, where they were advised by the governor to go East "in a ship of war, on account of the Greek pirates." In the event, they sailed for Alexandria "under convoy of the *Garnet* and four other vessels." Endless parties and excursions were involved, described in detail in the diaries.

But however sumptuous the hospitality encountered en route, to Montefiore and Judith this was above all a *religious* journey. They had started in May. In Malta they broke off from "amusements" to celebrate *Tish'ah be'Av* (the 9th of Ab), the twenty-four-hour fast instituted in memory of the destruction of the Temple. "Thank God," Montefiore says in his diary on August 2, "we are quite well after breaking the fast, which we did at 9:35, several stars being then visible. The day has been dreadfully hot and fatiguing. My poor wife suffered so much that I endeavored to persuade her to break her fast by about four o'clock, but she would not."

The religious element became very strong as the journey proceeded. Disregarding the threats of war and plague, they finally arrived at Jaffa on October 16, and the following day approached Jerusalem on foot, dismounting, as all pilgrims did in those days, to express their sorrow at seeing the Holy City in ruins. They stayed only a few days, visiting the holy places and all manner of synagogues. But this short visit seems to have supplied a mainspring for the rest of Montefiore's life. Boarding their ship at Jaffa, he wrote in his diary: "This day I begin a new era. I fully intend to dedicate much more time to the welfare of the poor, and to attend synagogue as regularly as possible on Monday, Thursday, and Saturday."

Mondays and Thursdays are days on which a short passage from the Torah is read in synagogue, in preparation, as it were, for the major reading on the Sabbath. The custom links daily piety with regular pious *work*; and never was a vow carried through with greater conscientiousness, especially in relation to the Holy Land. Though he worked there on a mass of relatively small practical matters, some of what he did, especially in housing, has survived to this day, as in the charming residential area of Yemin Moshe overlooking the walls of Jerusalem. What matters much more, though, is the sense of a vow sustained.

This spiritual fulfillment in the Holy Land stands in sharp contrast to the empty results of the great political missions which he undertook throughout the second half of his life. Although he carried with him everywhere personal introductions from the Queen and supportive instructions from the Foreign Office to Britain's representatives in foreign capitals, and although he was received everywhere politely, even with deference, nothing whatever survived from the promises, made by every ruler he met, that an end would be put to the persecutions which had prompted his visit. At one point, he secured a *firman* from the Sultan of Turkey purporting to reverse the Damascus blood libel; but despite untiring efforts, all he could secure for the Jews who had been charged with this monstrous crime was a "pardon," not a clear statement that the charge had been false from the very beginning.

In its own terms, the phenomenal life of Sir Moses Montefiore seems wholly admirable, both for its splendid style and for its qualities of devotion and consistency. And it is no detraction, while seeing him in his own context, to point to the limits of his Jewish understanding —a blindness to what was coming, and a scant awareness of what had gone by.

On what lay ahead it was perhaps inevitable that a man so embedded in Victorian optimism would miss the fateful evils inherent for Jews in European society, and would miss, too, the need for a revolution that could fashion a new spirit of Jewish independence. Montefiore's religious love for the Holy Land did link him with those who came later to redeem it; but he never

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

envisaged the possibility, or the necessity, of a large-scale return. As it happens, a truer conception of the future was expressed in the form of a salute to Montefiore in the last months of his life. Chaim Weizmann, the great builder of Zionism, was then a boy of eleven living in a *shtetl* in Russia called Motol. He was entering high school in the nearby "metropolis" of Pinsk, and wrote a letter in Hebrew to his old rebbe, reassuring him that even in the big town he would never forget the Jewish teachings he had imbibed. Eloquent even at eleven, Weizmann set out in the letter his philosophy for the Jewish future. He admired the work being done in the Holy Land, and said that all Jews should "thank the patriot Moshe Montefiore." But this was not enough. Only a transformation of the Jews, through mass immigration into the land of Israel, would save the Jewish people: "For why should we look to the kings of Europe for compassion, that they should take pity on us and give us a resting place . . . ? To Zion, Jews! To Zion let us go."

MORE difficult to define is Montefiore's failure to identify fully with the range of Jewish thought and experience *before* his time. It is true that Montefiore and his wife Judith read the Bible, and especially the Psalms, whenever they could, and in a spirit of total belief. He had a fund of Bible quotations at his command, and introduced them regularly into his diaries to express his satisfaction at the way things were working out under the promised rubrics of virtue and its rewards. What he never seemed to do was to ask questions, to seek some deeper illumination related to his faith that would yield intellectual or emotional excitement beyond the pieties and certainties of formal prayer and traditional theology. He knew some Hebrew, but not enough, one imagines, to surrender to its mysteries as one brought up with a formal English education rejoices at the shafts of light that burst out of Shakespeare or Shelley.

The point can be illustrated, perhaps, by comparing Montefiore's Hebrew background with that of a Jewish leader seven or eight hundred years earlier in the Golden Age of Spain. Like Montefiore, there were Spanish and Portuguese Jews at this time who were powerful figures at court, wealthy enough in their private lives, skilled in their professions as financiers or scientists. But at the same time they were absorbed in an open exploration of Jewish cultural experience through the medium of the Hebrew language and Jewish philosophy. This was, admittedly, a rare phase of Jewish life in which there was not just an interchange between Jewish and non-Jewish cultures but, more strikingly, an expectation on the part of Jews that the deepest meanings, the most intense forms of expression, would be found within their own tradition.

These cultural, religious, and philosophical explorations were kept alive—and were even intensified for a time—in the Mediterranean countries and the Near East for a century or so after the expulsions from Spain and Portugal at the end of the 15th century. In his book *The Jews in the Renaissance*, the historian Cecil Roth writes of Jews active in Italian science, music, philosophy, the theater, and literature. These "were not merely loyal Jews but intellectually active Jews, conversant with Hebrew, studying its literature and devoted to Talmud scholarship." The men who were doctors to the Pope and mingled in the banks with the Medici were also rabbis of their communities.

Montefiore's ancestors—and those of the other "potent, grave, and reverend signiors" of his Sephardi community—had once lived by these canons, until the center of Jewish life moved to Eastern Europe where it fell under the talmudic disciplines of Poland. From the 18th century on, Jews who became absorbed in non-Jewish culture—as many increasingly did—ceased to look beneath the surface of Jewish history and literature unless they were professional scholars. Something precious was thereby lost, though it is beginning to resurface to some extent in our day.

NO ONE can say that Montefiore would have been a better leader, or have derived more out of his Jewish existence, if his mind had been suffused by the cultural experiences in which his cherished Sephardi ancestors were so deeply involved. And can one, in any event, reverse the flow of history? There were special reasons, as Cecil Roth explains, why the Jews were far ahead of Europe culturally during the flowering first of the Arab and then of the Italian renaissance—the only periods, he writes, "when absorption into the civilization of the environment had no corrosive effect on Jewish intellectual life."* After that, "Europe" caught up, and Jews put increasing emphasis on learning from their new environment.

From this perspective, Montefiore seems to have struck a balance peculiarly his own. Oblivious to the more complicated philosophies of Jewish life, he joyfully gave his full measure of devotion to the welfare of the Jewish people. In the new balance that Jewish leaders of today and tomorrow have to strike for themselves, the demands of welfare have been moved, by extraordinary circumstances, to a new dimension, and will evoke an appropriate response; but by the same token, the evaluation of Jewish spiritual life seems to stir up forces that had atrophied during the emancipation period. If these, too, begin to be satisfied in new ways, it will be as if those concerned were filling in the blank pages of Montefiore's Jewish affinities.

* The dream of recapturing this balance today appears to animate a good deal of the recent work of Cynthia Ozick, who in her latest novel, *The Cannibal Galaxy*, invokes symbolically the immensely cultured French Jewish writer Edmond Fleg: "Lordly civilization enmeshed with lordly civilization, King David's heel caught in Victor Hugo's lyre, the metaphysicians Maimonides and Pascal, Bialik and Keats, Gemara hooked to the fires of algebra."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Sex and Euphemism

Joseph Epstein

In the beginning was the Word. There followed, at an undetermined but (one assumes) decent interval, private, harsh, and dirty words. Invention here being the mother of necessity, the need for euphemism arose. Nowhere could this need have been greater, or more evident, than in the realm of sex. Euphemism, so well worth decrying in almost every other sphere of life, is in the sexual sphere heartily, happily, one is ready to go so far as to say healthily, welcome. There are after all times and places where it will not do to call a spade a spade, let alone other things other things.

Remove euphemism from the realm of discourse about sex and one is left with two possibilities, neither of them very pretty. One is to speak about it clinically: genitalia, pudenda, vas deferens, reproductive organs, and all that. The other is to speak not so much plainly as profanely: to let, so to say, the most freely used Australian adjective and other nouns and verbs fly. There is also the loathsome prospect of speaking in code, as is sometimes done by coy lovers who christen their private parts with given or surnames, and thus utter, as I seem to recall of a character in a wretched novel I read years ago whose title and author I have successfully blocked, lines such as: "Will Mrs. Featherbody be at home and pleased to receive my man Andrew this evening?"

Many people have felt that the subject of sex is best dealt with by silence, the ultimate euphemism. Still, at all times in literature—from Petronius to Rabelais to the Earl of Rochester to the Victorian pornographers to Henry Miller to the work today of nearly every contemporary novelist—silence on the subject of sex has been broken, and is unlikely to be restored. Sex throughout history has perhaps been on most people's minds, but in this century it has increasingly been on almost everyone's tongue as well. Philip Larkin might write:

> Sexual intercourse began
> In nineteen sixty-three
> (Which was rather late for me)—
> Between the end of the *Chatterley* ban
> And the Beatles' first LP.

But Freud long before made it difficult to keep the silence on sex; and Freudianism, if not Freud himself, put paid to sexual reticence for all but good. As a blue eminence, Gay Talese, author of a participatory journalistic study of the sexual revolution entitled *Thy Neighbor's Wife*, has remarked: "Sex is so very important; it is probably the most important thing. What is more important? I know of nothing." Talese's wisdom may be in doubt; his sincerity, never.

How does one talk about this "most important thing"? The range of possibilities is very great. Sex may be spoken of tenderly or toughly, lyrically or lasciviously, beautifully or brutally, and in all these various ways by the same person on the same day. Because sex can evoke many moods, it requires many distinct vocabularies. This wasn't always so. For the greater part of the vast history of humankind talk of sex, of bodily love, was distinctly out of bounds. Certainly it was not permitted in polite society: that one did not speak of it there was one of the things that made polite society, well, polite. Talk of sex tended to be confined to intimate diaries or to blushing utterances in a physician's office. I recall some years ago coming upon a medical encyclopedia, published in the United States around the turn of this century, in which the article on masturbation appeared under the rubric, "The Secret Vice." All sex, though, then seemed, if not a vice, clearly a bit of a secret—D.H. Lawrence's "dirty little secret."

Sex is a secret no longer. The unspeakable is nowadays speakable—and spoken. Not to speak of it with a fair frequency is felt to be a mark of being, in a phrase of the day, "uptight" (itself a vague sexual euphemism referring to the condition of one's sphincter). In his article on euphemism H.W. Fowler could complain about the Victorians being "mealy-mouthed" in using such phrases as "nether garments" and "unmentionables" and "inexpressibles." But what would he have thought of the female character in a novel I recently read who, noting that she was in her menstrual period, called it "vampire time"?

The euphemisms of former days have in so many instances been traded in for dysphemisms (their opposite) in our own. My guess is that most people of my generation—I am forty-seven—grew up as I did, with silence on the subject of sex reigning at home and dysphemisms and slang of colorful companions reigning in the schoolyard. I am not quite in the case of the hero of Walker Percy's novel *The Moviegoer* who, when asked by his aunt if he had been intimate with his cousin on a long train ride, answered, "Not very"; or in that of the bumpkin in an old joke who, when asked if he had slept with a fast woman (there's a euphemism) he had gone out with the night before, answered, "Slept with her, hell. I didn't get any rest at all. We were up all night screwing." But I have come to many sexual euphemisms late in life. Only a few years ago did I hear for the first time the euphemism "an interesting condition" to describe a pregnant woman. More recently than that I came upon the phrase a "Boston marriage" to describe a lesbian relationship in which two woman love and live with one another but do not engage in sexual relations. Here is a case of a euphemism doing dirty work of its own, and of a snide sort. I, for one, don't hold with the no-

---

Joseph Epstein *is the editor of the* American Scholar, *our regular fiction critic, and the author of, most recently,* The Middle of My Tether, *a collection of essays. The present piece will be included in* Fair of Speech: The Uses of Euphemism, *edited by D.J. Enright, to be published next year by Oxford University Press.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion of a "Boston marriage," or at any rate with calling two women who live together, no matter how great their love for each other, lesbians, if in fact they do not have sexual congress (another euphemism, I suppose).

Nor, in the sexual realm, is it always clear when a euphemism is a euphemism. The word "servicing" is an example. "Nothing wrong with her that a good servicing wouldn't cure" is the way it is most frequently used. "I serviced her only two days ago" is another common usage. Obviously "servicing" is a blunting of the most frequently used Australian participial noun, and hence in a rough sense it qualifies as a euphemism. Yet isn't "servicing," as a metaphorical term that imputes a mechanistic nature to female physiology, even more brutal than the word it is meant to soften?

The equivalent term for "servicing" for a male, at least in the United States, is having one's "ashes hauled." "He needs his ashes hauled" is the standard sentence for a man thought to have gone too long without sexual intercourse. This phrase speaks to a supposed deep masculine inner heat that can only be burned out in the furnace of sex—hence those ashes, burned out coals at the end of a sexual turn, being hauled off. Yet such a phrase demonstrates not only the difficulty of separating euphemism from dysphemism in the realm of sex, but the ease with which both can slide off into slang. Having one's "ashes hauled" is clearly a slang phrase, but is it a euphemism or dysphemism? Difficult to say. What can be said, though, is that it does somehow seem an improvement upon, "He acquired sexual relief through fornication."

"He acquired sexual relief through fornication." That dreary sentence gives the clue as to why we need euphemisms, slang, even dysphemisms, and anything else we can call to our aid in order to discuss sex. For that sad sentence, straightly and dryly phrased as it is, is a highly efficient reminder of that part of human life which is at bottom animal—and of which most of us, thank you all the same, would just as soon not be reminded. From the fact of our animality, of which sex for a good part of our lives can be a nagging reminder, euphemism, dysphemism, and slang can afford relief; they permit us to talk about sex less directly. The editors of the *Dictionary of American Slang* are surely correct when they note: "Slang words for sexual attraction and for a variety of sexual acts, positions, and relationships are more common than standard words. Standard non-taboo words referring to sex are so scarce or remote and scientific that slang is often used in referring to the most romantic, the most obscene, and the most humorous sexual situations."

Although the editors of the *Dictionary of American Slang* refer to "the most humorous sexual situations," I should say that almost all sexual situations are humorous—excluding only those that one is involved in oneself. Sex is of course often played as comedy—in certain plays, where the physical stuff takes place off stage, in the novels of writers like Henry Miller and Philip Roth, in every dirty joke ever devised—and it is perhaps healthiest when so played. Both animals and human beings feel the need to fornicate; one of the decisive differences between them is that human beings can, sometimes, laugh about it.

Certainly they tend to be more admirable when laughing about sex than when talking about it seriously. When we talk about sex seriously we tend to reveal ourselves as the pathetic, or lying, or hypocritical creatures we are. Consider the term "open marriage," a euphemism that came into being roughly a decade or so ago through the agency of a popular American manual of sexual advice entitled *Open Marriage*. Stripped of its psychological sham, an open marriage is one in which the partners to a conventional marriage have agreed to give way to the need to copulate with anyone else who will agree to copulate with them. Much better for self-respect to call such an arrangement an open marriage.

Thanks to the sexual revolution—itself a bit of a euphemism to denote the freedom from the fear of pregnancy that the newer methods of contraception allowed as well as the loss of the power of religion to inhibit promiscuity—and to the women's-liberation movement, a number of older sexual euphemisms have been marched off the stage and a number of new sexual euphemisms have been marched on. Perhaps no man has ever called his mistress that—mistress—to her face, but nowadays the term has an antique quaintness. (Nor has there ever been an equivalent euphemism for men.) "Roommate," which once clearly meant someone of the same sex with whom one was sharing quarters, now no longer so clearly means that. "Shacking up," once the slightly dysphemistic term for people of the opposite sex who lived together, is now gone. "Living together" is now the standard term, although the U.S. Bureau of the Census—and bureaucrats can generally be counted upon to coin good heavy-handed euphemisms—now calls the unmarried person with whom one lives one's "spouse equivalent." The most vivid euphemism—or is it a dysphemism?—that has come my way courtesy of the sexual revolution is the "hat trick": a term that, in ice hockey, means a player has scored three goals, and that under the dispensation of the sexual revolution refers to a man—or as easily to a woman—who has slept with three different women (men) in the same day. "Progress," said William James, "is a terrible thing."

Historians of the Victorian era are fond of recalling a time when even the legs of pianos were covered. But today, to take a line from the lovely poem of Henry Reed, "today we have naming of parts." In a brief essay entitled "The Lexicon of Prohibition," Edmund Wilson came up with 105 different words and phrases for drunkenness. With a bit of patience one could no doubt come up with a list as lengthy for the names of the male and female genitals and one quite as long again for female breasts. Dick, dong, prick, prong, quim, quiff, boobs, bazooms—private parts nowadays have numerous public names. Boff, bang, plank, hump: the most freely used Australian noun has no shortage of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

synonyms. The war against censorship is long over, though it is not altogether clear what the victory has brought.

Can it be that the losers in this war have not been the Grundys and the Comstocks but those front-line troops, serious writers, novelists chief among them? Asterisks used to do for what was deemed unseemly language in books, but today an asterisk in a book is as rare as a virgin in life. Malcolm Muggeridge is the last writer I know of to describe himself as "a man of the asterisk generation." Of course there were writers before Muggeridge's generation who had forgone asterisks and chosen instead to mention, to spell out, the unmentionable. James Joyce, for one, whose *Ulysses* provided a landmark legal case in the anti-censorship war. D.H. Lawrence, who could be quite belligerent about such matters, was the General Patton in this war. Henry Miller was perhaps its Ernie Pyle. Since the late 1940's, though, the enemy has been clearly on the run. Such American novelists as James Jones, Norman Mailer, and William Burroughs have handled that part of the operation known in military history as the mopping up. Today it is apparently difficult to write a novel that is free of two or three hot and heavy sex bouts. Especially does one find, I won't say vivid but certainly elaborate, sexual description in the work of academic novelists. The stakes here go up all the time, and the trend is to more and more detailed description. A wag—I, actually—once wrote that the novels of the future are likely to be peopled with genitals sitting around discussing fashionable ideas.

THE argument in favor of abandoning euphemism, of treating sex in an open and explicit manner, is well enough known. Sex is a part of life, perhaps a centrally important part, and as such it calls for candor. To evade candor is to invite dishonesty and, worse, to court repression. Sex is a very human activity, and nothing human ought to be alien—that is, hidden, unspoken, pocketed away. To talk candidly, to write openly, about sex is a necessary freedom. And here we come to the knocking over of barriers. Something there is about the modern temperament that cannot tolerate a barrier; it must be pushed against, bulldozed, razed. How easily the barrier against candor in sex fell, how it seems in retrospect to have been constructed out of marzipan. A few solid shoves and it toppled. Today one can say in print anything one likes of a sexual kind. Only the discretion of editors and publishers stands in the way—in other words, one can say in print anything one likes of a sexual kind.

To speak autobiographically, I would add here that growing up under the ancient sexual regime, before the revolution, brought certain benefits. A little smut then went a long way. More precisely, you had to go a long way to get a little smut. To Paris or Mexico City, in fact, whence one could bring back those plain-type green-covered paperback editions of Henry Miller's novels published by the renegade firm of Olympia Press. Now one has to go almost quite as far to avoid it. Titillation, in those days, was still possible, whereas today disgust seems endemic. Our age, which treats war, genocide, and tyranny euphemistically, has in sex gone quite the other way.

Sometimes it seems a badge of modernity to speak uneuphemistically about sex. In the United States in recent years we have had the phenomenon of the publication of the journals of Edmund Wilson. I say phenomenon, for what is phenomenal about them is how uneuphemistically sexual these journals from America's most distinguished man of letters are. The closer to our own time Wilson's journals get—thus far, publication is up to the 1940's—the less euphemistic they become. In the 1920's Wilson notes, "I addressed myself to her bloomers"; by the 1940's he refers to "my large pink prong." Wilson goes beyond candor, beyond indiscretion, to describe sex with his own wife:

> Would always run her tongue into my mouth when I kissed her before I had a chance to do it to her—and would do it so much and so fast that I hardly had a chance to get my own in. Would clasp her legs together very hard when I had my hand or my penis in her—seemed to have tremendous control of the muscles inside her vagina. Her frank and uninhibited animal appetite contrasted with her formal and gracious aristocratic manners.

This is a fairly mild example of the sort of thing that turns up in Edmund Wilson's journals. It is sex written without euphemism—and it is quite devoid of tenderness, is in fact chilling, even loathsome. What is of interest is that Edmund Wilson himself wished to see such material published. What, one wonders, did he think publication of his sex bouts, written so icily, would demonstrate? His prowess, his humanity, his modernity? After one has read a number of such Wilsonian passages, one is gripped by a single thought—the wish that one hadn't.

WHENCE derives this need for explicitness? Does it come from the fact that, the freedom to abandon euphemism now being available, it seems a shame not to avail oneself of it? Does it come from the notion that euphemism no longer, somehow, does the job? Allow me to put a sexually euphemistic passage in evidence. It is drawn from *Homecoming*, the autobiography of Floyd Dell, in which Dell describes his first love affair (another euphemism). Dell writes:

> There was a girl; and we kissed. And then, suddenly, I was in a realm more real to me than the world I had thought of as real—which had now become a shadow, a dream, something remote and dim. I was happy and free; not a literary editor; not a husband; only myself. All the values in my universe were suddenly transvalued. I felt like a wanderer, long absent in alien lands, who sets eyes again upon his native place. Why should I have ever imagined myself that stranger, worn that uniform? This, the realm of liberty, was one in which I could be at ease. There need be no effort here to be what one was not, only infinite sincerity of oneself to another, in love and talk and laughter. We made love happily and solemnly.

Does such a passage seem hopeless-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ly old-fashioned—it was written in 1933—corny, prudish? At the risk of sounding an old-fashioned, corny prude, I must confess it doesn't seem any of those things to me. What I rather like about it is the room it leaves to the imagination. It is very earnest, of course, but then so does love tend to be. It could not, I am confident, be improved by additional detail recounting every chronicle of the crotch or saga of the sack.

In the positive, the glorious sense, the sexiest book I know is *Anna Karenina*, and it is all but shorn of sexual detail. A shoulder is described, eyes, posture, a uniform, tears. "Anna felt as though she were sinking down. But it was not terrible, but delightful." These sentences do not refer to a scene of sexual surrender, as they might if they appeared in a contemporary novel, but to Anna Karenina's thoughts about Vronsky as she rides the train back to Saint Petersburg on her return to her son and husband. There is a great deal, there is everything, at stake in the sexuality in *Anna Karenina*, but sex itself is oh so lightly, so artfully touched upon, hinted at in the novel's pages. It is so sexy almost precisely because it refuses to speak directly—uneuphemistically—about sex. It is sexy because Tolstoy, that instinctual and consummate artist, knew that the best pornographer is the mind of the reader, which in this matter required only the slightest assistance from him.

Did Henry James, whose whole art can be said to be that of euphemism, think much about physical love? The best researchers into James's private life conclude that he himself never made bodily love. Yet it is difficult to imagine that a man "so assailed by the perceptions," as one of his acquaintances once described James, did not perceive this, too. More to the point, did he imagine his characters, to adopt another euphemism, "in the act"? Are Chad Newsome and Mme. de Vionnet in *The Ambassadors* lovers? Are the Princess and Paul Muniment in *The Princess Casamassima*? From James we have nary a direct word, though sufficient reason nonetheless to believe that they are. Sufficient reason is all James provides—and it is enough. (In *The Golden Bowl* no doubt about such relationships remains, though James still feels no need to show slides.) What happens to Isabel Archer after her return to Italy and her betraying husband, Gilbert Osmond, now forever denied his conjugal rights (to speak once again euphemistically)? How easily she is imagined, long after the novel has been closed, alone and in her bed in her villa, night after night, and what a sad and necessary waste it seems. Henry James, the sexless novelist, is in many respects the sexiest novelist of all—and further proof that, in speaking and writing about sex, less can be more.

More, conversely, can be less. The American novelist James Gould Cozzens was a writer who treated sex neither euphemistically nor dysphemistically but straight on. Yet to treat sex straight on, as Cozzens must have known, was to treat it dysphemistically—to make it seem worse than it is. A writer of dark vision, Cozzens looked upon sex as a solid piece of evidence arguing against humankind's hope for leading reasonable lives. The least reasonable man, in Cozzens's view, was the man who set out to be reasonable. In this hopeless endeavor sex was a sharp reminder of the human link with the animal, with the irrational. Here, in his somewhat twisted syntax, from his novel *By Love Possessed*, is how Cozzens makes his case:

> His as much as hers, the supple and undulous back hollowing at the pull of his hands to a compliant curve: his as much as hers, her occupied participative hips, her obediently divided embracing knees, her parts in moist manipulative reception. Then, hers as much as his, the breath got hastily in common; the thumping, one on another, of the hurried two hearts, the mutual heat of pumped bloods, the start of their uniting sweats. Grown, growing, gaining scope, hers then no less than his, the thoroughgoing, deepening, widening work of their connection; and his then no less than hers, the tempo slowed in concert to engineer a tremulous joint containment and continuance. Then, then, caution gone, compulsion in control, his —and hers, as well!—the pace unreined, raised, redoubled, all measurable measure lost. And, the incontinent instant brought to pass, no sooner his the very article, his uttermost, the stand-and-deliver of the undone flesh, the tottered senses' outgiving of astoundment, than—put besides themselves, hit at their secret quick, provoked by that sudden touch beyond any bearing—the deep muscle groups, come to their vertex, were in a flash convulsed; in spasms unstayably succeeding spasms, contracting on contraction on contraction—hers! Hers, too; hers, hers, hers!

Less light, less light, to reverse Goethe's dying request. Such a passage, without a single profane word in it, is extremely repulsive—enough to put a virile man off his sexual feed for quite a spell, enough to drive a refined woman into a nunnery. But James Gould Cozzens had his purposes, and, in writing about sex as he did, appears to have accomplished them.

It is not always clear what the purposes of other novelists are in placing elaborately described bouts of sex in their novels. It might be kindest to say that they are, in manifold senses, just screwing around. But I think these writers rather desperately need sex in order to stay in business as writers. It isn't that sex is all they know; it is merely that sex seems to be what they know best. To restrict myself to American novelists alone, I can think of three prominent figures who, but for the opportunity that the contemporary novel allows them to write about sex, would probably have to go into the dry-cleaning business: John Updike, Philip Roth, and Norman Mailer.

These three gents, to be sure, make quite different uses of sex in their novels. For John Updike sexual descriptions often provide an opportunity for a metaphor-soaked, lyrical workout; exceptions are the frequent sexual paces Updike puts his character Harry (Rabbit) Angstrom through, when it becomes lower-middle-class sex, plain-spoken and snarly and nasty. Philip Roth plays the sex in his novels chiefly for laughs, but play it he does, over and over and over. But whereas Up-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dike can be by turns pretentious and repellent, and Roth depressing while trying for humor, Norman Mailer, in his handling of the sexual subject, is unconsciously comic (not, I hasten to add, that reading him is likely to cheer anyone up). Sex almost always provides the big moments in Norman Mailer's novels; in these novels, sex, somehow, is always a challenge, a chance for triumph, an over the hill, boys, walk on the moon bullfight, though when it is over what one mostly remembers is the bull. Quotations on request.

Suffice it to say that in contemporary writing about sex, we are not talking, and haven't been for some years, about your simple Sunday afternoon fornication. Not only must sex in the contemporary novel grow more regular but it must become more rococo. Thus Updike presents us with an activity known euphemistically as California sunshine; Roth in his most recent novel has a woman whose purse contains a "nippleless bra, crotchless panties, Polaroid camera, vibrating dildo, K-Y jelly, Gucci blindfold, a length of braided velvet rope"; Mailer, relying on fundamentals, concentrates on heterosexual sodomy. Ah, the literary life.

I HAVE recently been pleased to discover my own ideas on this subject better formulated than I myself have been able to formulate them by Donald Davie. In *These the Companions*, a book of memoirs, Davie, at sixty, writes that, although he feels he understands a good deal about the power of love, he also feels he has come to understand the hopelessness of writing about it, except through indirection of the most tactful kind:

> But I am less confused about this than I used to be. For I have come to see clearly that there is no way to reconcile the essential and precious privacy of the amorous life, with the unavoidable publicity of print. Or rather there is indeed one way, and of course it is the time-honored way; by euphemism, which is to say circumlocution, which is to say figurative language. This is what makes Yeats, not Joyce nor Austin Clarke, the most erotic of Irish writers. The handful of poems that he wrote for his wife under the figure of King Solomon addressing the Queen of Sheba are more audacious, under the thinly transparent but necessary veil more "outspoken," even (if it comes to that) more titillating, than the most notorious passages of *Ulysses* or the most outlandish late poems by Clarke. When Yeats read *Lady Chatterley's Lover* he said that each of the famous four-letter words was like a hole burned in the page; and in saying so he voiced no prissy constraint, but was rather making a technical point, surprised to see so practiced a writer as Lawrence falling into a novice's trap, trying to take an impossible short cut.

Are novelists in America and England, as is sometimes said of politicians, out too far in front of their constituents (or readers), or are they fairly representing them and their conduct in their novels? It is not easy to know. It is a tricky question of the kind of which came first, the sick chicken or the bad egg? This much, though, can be said: ours shall not be known as one of the great ages of reticence, especially about personal life. It has been said that many people in our day would sooner tell you about their sexual life than about their financial life. So many people now appear to carry their own psychoanalytic couch on their backs.

WE HAVE come a long way from the time when the word "virgin" was not permitted in metropolitan newspapers, when syphilis and gonorrhea (as H. L. Mencken notes in *The American Language*) were referred to as "vice diseases," when words like whore, homosexual, rape, and sexuality were not used at all. Today, under the new dispensation, we have books with titles such as *The Love Muscle*, *The Sensuous Woman*, *The Playboy Adviser*, and *States of Desire: Travels in Gay America*. Obviously, we have come a long way; the only question is, in what direction?

Nowadays people tend to speak plainly or profanely about sex, its parts and their mechanics, and euphemistically about the benefits said to derive from the exercise thereof. As for those benefits, they are frequently described as "fulfilling," "growthful," and "humanizing": one tends, in these circles, less and less to have sex but to "experience" it. The people I am talking about here refer to one another as "feeling," "caring," and "loving" people. One of the marks that distinguishes them is that they tend to go in for words—some of them euphemistic—whose meaning is harder to capture than a squid in a pool of molasses. Yet these same people have been known to speak right up about their clitoris or prostate, and talk in unhushed tones about orgasm. This odd combination of soft words and hard words appears to be at the heart of the sexual-liberation movements of our day. These movements tend to be confessional, anti-repression, and, it nearly goes without saying, anti-euphemism, except about ends and goals.

Oddly, a good deal of the language used in connection with homosexuality is euphemistic, or at least bordering on the euphemistic. Owning up to one's homosexuality has for a great many years now been referred to as "coming out of the closet"; it is also sometimes said of such a freshly emergent boy or man that he has "come out," a phrase which is reminiscent of the American debutante balls of another day. Euphemism becomes slangy, though, when Edmud White, author of *States of Desire: Travels in Gay America*, writes of the city of Cincinnati that "It's a very sedate, closety city." "Cruising," a word that refers to searching around in bars and on the streets for homosexual mates, rides the line between slang and euphemism, leaning over in the direction of euphemism, in my view, because such a "cruise" can have many a bump in it, including beatings and humiliations certainly not implied in that gentle floating word. I take it to be indisputably a euphemism, though, when it is said of a homosexual man who takes part in sado-masochistic activity that he is "into leather." In this realm the largest argument of all is about whether the self-selected word "gay" is itself a euphemism. People who oppose it claim it is a misnomer. Misnomer or not, it appears to have stuck, so that the word gay referring to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

homosexual is quite securely lodged in the language and nearly all the other uses of gay must now depart. Still, the invention of the word gay to stand for homosexual was surely intended to be euphemistic: the substitution of an agreeable or inoffensive word for one with unpleasant or offensive associations.

The women most ardently engaged in the women's-liberation movement like to speak less euphemistically about sex. Women, they feel, have been [most freely used Australian verb, simple past] over, and euphemism, they reason, may have provided the screen behind which this was done. Therefore they speak plainly about earthy things: about sex as part of the bill of human rights, about orgasm as an amendment to that bill, about measures of sexual reform to come. One can sometimes watch and listen to liberated women go on in this manner on television talk shows, where they do so, publicly, with very little diffidence. So little diffidence as is often involved in a wife speaking before an audience of millions about her most private activities can, the first two or three hundred times one witnesses it, provide a bit of a shock. Perhaps, though, it ought not to. We live, after all, in a sex-ridden time in which we have yet to establish a proper vocabulary to talk about our deeds and desires.

IT IS NOT, I think, that people are more sex-driven in one age than another: it is instead that in some ages sex seems to be more on the mind than during others. If our euphemisms do not tell much about the quality of contemporary sex, our slang, I believe, does. Getting, sheer getting, seems to loom large in current sexual slang: getting it up, getting it on, getting it off, getting any? getting much? Meanwhile, in universities, for the first time in history, we have women's studies, which means that we have agreed to study literature, history, and society from the standpoint of gender —which is to say, sex. Again, no contemporary biography is considered complete until the subject's sex life is duly accounted for; and here sexual secrets are sought, and, sought arduously enough, often found. More and more the assumption in contemporary life is that sex looms larger and larger.

It is a truism that practice precedes theory, and language often precedes practice. In the language currently used to describe sexual conduct, a language whose most notable feature has been the defeat of the euphemism, both sexual practice and theory reveal themselves. Sexual practice has become easier, less guilty, and from the standpoint of pregnancy less hazardous; sexual theory now deems sex necessary, almost to the point of becoming a rudimentary biological function. As this has come into being, however, an older theory of sexual love has been withering and dying out: the idea—and the ideal—of love as a Grand Passion, which derives from Christianity and from romanticism and which held sway through the 19th century. Under the ideal of the Grand Passion, love was thought sacred. Men and women could not talk about sex as openly and as uneuphemistically as they now do and still hold it sacred.

In a suggestive essay entitled "Fashions in Love," which he published in a collection in 1929, Aldous Huxley remarked that the Christian and romantic conception of sexual love seemed to have almost entirely lost ground to a more scientific and psychological conception of sexual love. In his essay Huxley spoke of what was wrong with both conceptions. "The older conception was bad," he noted, "in so far as it inflicted unnecessary and undeserved suffering on the many human beings whose congenital and acquired modes of lovemaking did not conform to the fashionable Christian-romantic pattern which was regarded as being uniquely entitled to call itself Love."

The new conception, itself the product of the campaign against old taboos and repressions, was also not without its defects. Huxley wrote: "The new conception is bad, it seems to me, in so far as it takes love too easily and too lightly." Talking freely about sex might go a long way toward shearing it of its "guilty excitement and thrilling shame," yet Huxley thought the then current "fashion in love-making is likely to be short, because love that is psychologically too easy is not interesting."

Aldous Huxley believed that, with the older Christian-romantic conception of sexual love all but dead, and with the new scientific-psychological conception terribly inadequate, it would only be a matter of time before a "new or revived mythology" would arise "to create those internal restraints without which sexual impulse cannot be transformed into love." Here Huxley thought—recall it was the 1920's—that D. H. Lawrence's "new mythology of nature" was a doctrine "fruitful in possibilities," which, as we now well know, it hasn't proved in the least. Nearly half a century later, this new mythology, proving quite as tardy as Godot, has yet to arrive. While awaiting it, most people appear to have passed the time sitting around talking all too frankly about—what else?—sex.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The World's Favorite Movie Star

Richard Grenier

It starts with a vulgar case of armed robbery. Three thugs break into a lunch counter, where, to their misfortune, Dirty Harry Callahan is in the habit of taking his absent-minded snacks. Tipped off, Callahan enters the coffee shop, is fired at, and returns the fire, putting two of the thugs permanently out of action. But a third thug is still on the loose, and grabs a waitress as hostage. Police sirens are beginning to wail outside, and the thug knows that his one chance of escaping now is to demand a getaway car and safe passage, keeping the waitress as his cherished hostage. His only problem is Detective Harry Callahan. The nervous thug clutches the waitress to him tightly, his pistol against her head. At a shot from the police he will kill his hostage, but not, of course, if a shot from the police blows his head off first. Carefully, Callahan raises his .44 Magnum until he has the criminal's eyes in his sights. The thug is agitated. The waitress is, understandably, terrified. Callahan is suffused with a deadly calm. "Go ahead," he says to the thug, who is still considering whether or not to attempt a getaway. "Make my day." The criminal's nerve slackens and he throws his weapon to the floor. It is over.

In one form or another, this scene is repeated several times in Clint Eastwood's *Dirty Harry* series: *Dirty Harry, Magnum Force, The Enforcer,* and now *Sudden Impact,* from which the above episode is taken. In every one of the scenes there is a criminal who has killed, attempted to kill, or is threatening to kill innocent people. In every one Eastwood, who plays a police detective in San Francisco, places his life on the line. In every one, there is the sardonic, icy challenge: "Try me." "Do you feel lucky?" "Make my day." Usually the criminal loses his nerve and surrenders. If not, Callahan blows his head to bits. For dealing with murderers, real or potential, in defense of innocent people, and acting entirely within the rules, Harry Callahan does not hesitate to kill. One might almost suspect he enjoys it. One can see why Clint Eastwood, the world's biggest and most highly paid movie star for some fifteen years now, is not a particular favorite of the American Civil Liberties Union.

His ethic is not different from that of a soldier. Volunteer or conscript, the infantryman answers his country's call. His life is placed in peril. At the orders of his captain, or in accordance with the ordinary rules of engagement, he kills the enemy, feeling no qualms—particularly if the enemy has been threatening to kill him or his comrades. It is the law of war, and also common sense. As for the heartlessness, even gratification, that the Clint Eastwood character demonstrates in destroying the social vermin who, he obviously feels, are themselves destroying the fabric of our society, I can only quote a French official's comments on the special anti-riot force which in 1968 played a key role in containing the social turbulence that was thought to threaten the French Republic: "Well," he smiled. "You have to find the right man for the job." Harry Callahan, one feels, is the right man for the job.

But he is not the right man for the job as it is defined by the ACLU, which, starting from the admirable goal of defending civil liberties, now seems more concerned to protect the rights of suspected criminals (often avowed criminals) than the rights of law-abiding citizens. A friend of mine, who happens to be a former member of the National Security Council, has characterized this position as "the domestic equivalent of 'Better Red than Dead.'" My own view is that the constant hedging-in of the power of the police to accomplish their mission, and of public prosecutors to obtain convictions, is worse than either "Better Red than Dead" or pure pacifism, both of which are rationally defensible positions for those who are willing to accept slavery or who actually desire a Marxist-Leninist regime. (The true pacifist, moreover, might well be prepared to sacrifice his own life, and that of his wife and children, rather than commit the, to him, monstrosity of taking the life of another human being no matter how bloodthirsty.) But my friend was basically correct. There is a link between the extraordinary reluctance of many on the Left to use U.S. military power anywhere in the world, even in self-defense, and the efforts of many liberals at home to inhibit the application of harsh penalties against even confessed criminals. Both groups (and they are often the same people) shrink from the use of force, and this shrinking, on a national scale, places in some jeopardy the nation's ability to survive under its present institutions.

Clint Eastwood, to judge by his films, has never had the slightest doubt as to the legitimacy of the use of force in the service of justice, even rudimentary justice, and he has certainly had none whatever when its use is necessary to assure survival. This attitude has earned him, among some movie reviewers, a reaction that I think it only fair

Richard Grenier *is* Commentary*'s regular movie critic and the author of a novel,* The Marrakesh One-Two.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to call hatred. But the animosity of critics, often fatal in our times, has not stopped Clint Eastwood from becoming far and away America's leading movie star—indeed, far and away the leading movie star of the entire world. The critics have their darlings, like Meryl Streep and Woody Allen, no movie starring either of whom has yet to break into the big money. But far aloft looms Eastwood. Eastwood is number one.

Every year thousands of the nation's theater owners vote for the most popular movie star. Not only did Eastwood top the list for 1983 but he is the only living star to have made the top ten a full sixteen times—bringing him even with Clark Gable, and snapping at the heels of Gary Cooper. The only member of the Great Dead still out in front is the Duke himself, John Wayne, who, when once asked to guess who would succeed him, answered with his laconic smile, "Eastwood . . . my only logical successor." As for money, after *Every Which Way But Loose* (1978), a film Eastwood said ironically he had made for "the bare-knuckle subculture," he walked away with an estimated $15 million, making him the world's highest paid actor.

I have written more than once in these pages that with the loss of the giant mass audience to television, and with both TV and Broadway now considered by almost universal accord to be dross, the cinema has been forced almost willy-nilly into becoming the "class act" of the popular entertainment world. Its audience, compared with that of its competitors, is young, affluent, and educated, centering roughly on the university, pre-university, and post-university sectors of the population. Yet, true though this may be for the bulk of films produced by Hollywood, it is obviously not true for the films of Burt Reynolds, Sylvester Stallone, and Clint Eastwood.

Everyone in the movie industry knows that Eastwood and Reynolds have a "regional" appeal—so-so at best in New York (where the critical community is centered), but colossal draws in the West and South. My own observations of the crowds that turn out to see a new Eastwood movie in small industrial or agricultural towns near liberal-arts colleges, compared with those that turn out in the same towns to see a new film with Jane Fonda, lead me to think that there are virtually two nations, each easily recognizable by manners and speech. Jane Fonda draws the "university" crowd. Eastwood draws the skilled industrial workers, farmers, men who if they no longer work with their hands come from a different America from the Vassar that produced Jane Fonda and Meryl Streep. Another devoted bloc of Eastwood supporters—a fact not widely realized outside the movie industry—is American blacks. Perhaps one reason for this is that blacks are the first to suffer from increased inner-city crime, and they (if not all their leaders) tend to have extremely severe law-and-order attitudes.

WHAT you see in Clint Eastwood is pretty much what you get. You would think someone named Clint Eastwood would be named something like Clinton Eastwood, and that's exactly what his name is: Clinton Eastwood, Jr. His genealogy is also not far off the mark: English, Scottish, Irish, Dutch, a close approximation of an amalgam of this country's original stock. Born in San Francisco in 1931 in extremely modest circumstances, Eastwood was a child of the Depression. His father, Clinton, Sr., could not find steady work and traveled from town to town, holding a series of temporary jobs, taking his wife and little son and daughter with him. Eastwood estimates that they moved so often that in his first ten years of schooling he must have attended ten different schools, making him something of a loner, a wanderer, another throwback to an older America when the country was filled with men roaming the land, looking for work and a place to build a new life. Finally his father found permanent employment in Oakland, California, and Eastwood attended Oakland Technical High School.

Eastwood's early relationship with his family offers a simple clue to his attitudes toward life and toward his country. He once said in an interview, "My father always kept telling me, you don't get something for nothing, and although I rebelled, I never rebelled against that. . . . I always got along great with my parents." And also: "I think my parents and my grandmother—she was quite a person, very self-sufficient, lived by herself on a mountaintop—probably had more to do with my turning out the way I am than any educational process I may have gone through. . . . I was lucky to have them."

All his life Eastwood has worked. He has cut timber, baled hay, fought forest fires, labored more than a year as a lumberjack in Oregon. He has worked a blast furnace for the Bethlehem Steel Company in Texas, worked for Boeing in Seattle. Drafted into the army, he managed to work part-time as a stevedore. When the Korean war broke out, Eastwood was teaching other young soldiers how to swim. "My name just didn't come up," he says; in a fluke, he was the only man in his outfit not shipped to Korea. But he still managed to crash in a U.S. Navy bomber in a routine mission off the California coast, escaping death narrowly.

After the army, Eastwood enrolled in Los Angeles City College in business administration, earning his way in an ever-lengthening list of spectacularly non-upwardly mobile jobs: gas-station attendant, janitor, digging foundations for swimming pools. He had been nagged for years by friends to make a try at acting in movies, and he finally went to Universal Pictures, asked for an appointment, took a test, cold, and to his surprise was offered a job as a "contract player" —at $75 a week. His first part was a minor role in *Revenge of the Creature*. He was soon promoted to $100 a week, but, in time, Universal decided Clint Eastwood just didn't have what it takes and dropped him. By 1958 he was back to digging swimming pools.

Like politicians, actors need to be lucky, and later in the same year, by sheer chance, Eastwood caught the eye of an executive of CBS-TV while having lunch with an employee of the company's story department. The random encoun-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ter led to the offer of a leading role in the network's upcoming Western series *Rawhide*, an endless cattle drive suggested by Howard Hawks's 1948 classic Western, *Red River*, starring John Wayne and Montgomery Clift. Oddly in view of his subsequent career, but logically in view of his age—still only twenty-seven—Eastwood was not given the John Wayne role but that of Montgomery Clift, the younger man, a part he has described as "sheepish." *Rawhide* became one of the most successful series in the history of television, running for a full nine years and syndicated throughout the world.

MOST television stars are born, flourish, and return to dust without ever having made it to the Elysian Fields of "the movies." This would probably have been the lot of Clint Eastwood if not for one of the more bizarre international cushion shots in the history of the world cinema.

First, it should be known that Akira Kurosawa, almost universally held to be the greatest film director in Japanese history (*Rashomon*, *The Seven Samurai*), is a great fan of American Westerns. This is not as eccentric as it sounds. A staple of Japanese movies for decades was the so-called *chambara* film (the word is an onomatopoeic rendition in Japanese of the clinking-together of swords), action movies set during the endless civil wars of the two-century Tokugawa Shogunate. Although the *chambara* film is already a close equivalent to the U.S. Western, this was not enough for Kurosawa. He decided to make a *chambara* movie following the standard story line of the American genre. The result was his masterful *Yojimbo*.

Next, an obscure but not untalented *Italian* director named Sergio Leone, seeing *Yojimbo*, determined to make an "American" adaptation of this Japanese adaptation of an American Western. Leone had also been watching *Rawhide* on Italian television. He liked Clint Eastwood's looks, and for $15,000 he had a deal. During the "hiatus" (off-season) from *Rawhide*, Eastwood turned up in Almeria, Spain, found he was the only man on the set speaking English, somehow or other finished a film he was told was to be named *The Magnificent Stranger*, and returned to California and *Rawhide*.

He had kept himself entertained in the acting, however. Tired of the engaging, ingratiating character he played in *Rawhide*, which had made him the idol of American teenagers, he went all the way in the other direction. In *The Magnificent Stranger* the Man With No Name, self-possessed, cold-eyed, kills a lot of people and never flinches once. They are all very bad people, of course, so there is no need to feel sorry for them. But the Man With No Name's hand never trembles. Uncertainty never clouds his brow. Eastwood, who felt the character was far too ruthless for American audiences, returned from Spain certain that the Leone film would never be shown in America. But he had made film history. He had hit the mother lode.

Back in Los Angeles, months after his return, Eastwood was browsing through *Variety* and noticed that Italy was aboil with plans for more Westerns after the spectacular success of a film called *A Fistful of Dollars*. The title meant nothing to him. It was only when he saw a second story, that the film sweeping Europe *starred Clint Eastwood*, that he realized what had happened. The next year he was back making the second of what were to become known as "spaghetti Westerns," *For a Few Dollars More*. And the year after that, in 1966, he made the third and last of the Leone-Eastwood collaborations, *The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly*.

Each film was better directed and brought in more money than its predecessor, making Eastwood one of the world's biggest, most popular, and most highly paid actors. The world, apparently, still loved Westerns, that quintessential piece of U.S. folklore (or mythology, if you will). It loved the action, the blood-and-guts. It loved the directing. And it certainly loved Clint Eastwood. It loved his steely confidence, his self-control, his fearlessness, his assurance that he would win. For if you're winning people join you. If you lose confidence in yourself, they fall away. It is the way of the world.

In the United States, however, in the mid-60's, certain highly vocal elements of the population had not only lost confidence in America, they hated it. They accused it of genocide, oppression, official racism, waging unprovoked war against harmless Third World people. They spelled America with a "k" as if it were Nazi Germany reborn. As of the end of 1966, not a single American movie distributor was willing to take a chance on the hottest property in world show business—a native-born American starring in a native American genre. Then in 1967 United Artists took the plunge, and for a modest figure picked up the U.S. distribution rights for the Eastwood-Leone trilogy. It turned out to be one of the best investments the company ever made. Released in chronological order beginning in early 1967, the films received the expected disastrous reviews, but *A Fistful of Dollars* was one of the company's biggest moneymakers for years. *For a Few Dollars More*, released later the same season, made even more money. By the time *The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly* opened in early 1968—the year, interestingly, of the Tet offensive in Vietnam—crowds for the Eastwood film were vast.

IT HAS often been said that the recent spectacular upsurge of the so-called women's "gothic" novel is a reaction against the new feminism, and I think the point could easily be made that the meteoric rise of Clint Eastwood was a reaction against the radicalism of the 60's. Not that there weren't heavy thinkers around who did their best to get things upside-down. Two film historians, writing from the perspective of the "unalleviated pessimism" of the 70's, explained the Eastwood phenomenon as an expression of "revolutionary violence," going so far as to say that the Eastwood character was "Guevara without the encumbrances." This is on a level of silliness with claiming that the Lone Ranger was "Lenin without the encumbrances." Whatever the explanation, before

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

long *Life* magazine, in its earlier, grander incarnation, ran a cover story with the astonished headline: "THE WORLD'S FAVORITE MOVIE STAR IS—NO KIDDING—CLINT EASTWOOD!"

In the four years after his return to Hollywood as an international star, Eastwood made a mixed bag of eight movies with no clear-cut polemical bent but conventional enough in their morality and patriotism: three Westerns, two World War II films, and a "cop" movie. The one for which he got greater critical praise than he had ever received before in his life was the "Hitchcockian" *Play Misty for Me*, which he directed himself. In a plot whose initial stages seem to have been suggested by Nathanael West's *Miss Lonelyhearts*, Eastwood plays the most popular disc jockey in the Carmel-Monterey area in California. He attracts the passionate attentions of a very forward woman who gradually reveals herself to be hysterically jealous, psychotic, and, ultimately, murderous. In the film's final scene, with her trying to kill him, he lands a bone-crushing punch to her face, knocking her through the windows, over the balcony, and down into the ocean below. It is all in justifiable self-defense, but one doubts that *Play Misty for Me* is Gloria Steinem's favorite movie.

In film after film, with occasional dips and then "corrections," as with stock-market charts, Clint Eastwood kept moving steadily higher and higher. Several changes also occurred during this period in the way Eastwood worked and led his life. First of all, he left Hollywood and built himself a home on the outskirts of Carmel, some 90 miles from where he was born in San Francisco. He is not a Hollywood-type person and is never, or almost never, seen at gatherings of Hollywood's gilded set. He does not go with the herd. Second, he organized his own production company which he called Malpaso Productions (after a creek crossing his property in Carmel). "My theory was that I could foul up my career just as well as anyone could foul it up for me, so why not try it?" he said. And also, "I've got a six-pack under my arm, and a few pieces of paper and a couple of pencils, and I'm in business. What the hell, I can work in a closet." Eastwood seems to have no love of show and not a speck of Hollywood megalomania. He knows the movie business well, however, and all his productions come in under schedule and under budget.

IN 1973, for reasons of his own, Eastwood decided to make *High Plains Drifter*, such an obvious reprise of the themes of his collaborations with Sergio Leone that one is almost tempted to think he wanted to give the "official" Eastwood version of the trilogy. This time, Eastwood directed the picture himself, and his screenwriter was the celebrated Ernest Tidyman, who had recently won an Academy Award for his screenplay for the hugely successful *The French Connection*. But *High Plains Drifter* also has similarities of structure with *High Noon*, one of the greatest of the classic Westerns, directed by Fred Zinnemann and acted by Gary Cooper almost exactly twenty years before.

In *High Noon*, frightened townspeople approach their sheriff (Cooper) with the alarming news that a gang of outlaws is heading for the town with the intention of taking it over. The sheriff prepares a defense, but at the last minute finds that not a single other man has the courage to stand with him against the bandits. All alone he guns them down, one by one, but then, out of contempt for the cowardly townspeople, unpins his sheriff's badge and throws it in the dust.

In *High Plains Drifter*, the beginning is Leone-esque. The Stranger (Eastwood), as the Man With No Name is known in some of the Leone films, rides into an isolated town in the Southwest some time in the 1870's. The only clue we have to the Stranger's identity is nightmares he has as he sleeps in the town hotel. In the nightmares we see a helpless man being whipped to death by shrouded hoodlums as a terrified citizenry stands by, too cowardly to help. By day, the general plot of *High Plains Drifter* proceeds for a time almost identically with *High Noon*.

A gang of outlaws is on its way to take over the town. Since there is no sheriff the terrified citizens plead with the Stranger to save them. They are a gang of sniveling cowards, however, and not a man jack among them can be induced to help. Here slight surrealistic and sometimes supernatural notes begin to appear. The Stranger (Eastwood) agrees to save the town, but makes the residents repaint it bright red and rename it "Hell," after which he disappears. The outlaws arrive and start to kill and loot and burn, but where is the Stranger? It is only when they begin to put the town to the torch that he reappears and wipes out the marauding outlaws to the last man. Now suddenly the townspeople have a mysterious vision of the scene that has haunted the Stranger's nights: it is of their former sheriff, being whipped to death by these same outlaws while they stood by, afraid to save him. "But who are you?" one of the citizens timidly asks the Stranger who has saved their town, perhaps, but not before allowing a very considerable amount of mayhem and destruction. "You know who I am," answers the Stranger calmly, and rides out of town as mysteriously as he came.

Now I, personally, have no idea who Clint Eastwood's mysterious Stranger is, whether he is the dead sheriff's brother, or his ghost, or perhaps an avenging angel. But I have no difficulty whatever in reading the morality of the tale, or understanding why the Stranger has the town painted red and renamed "Hell." What some of Eastwood's elite critics have difficulty grasping is that in his canon, cowardice is a punishable offense. The idea has become so pervasive among our educated classes that the proper stance for facing the world should be one of accommodating sensitivity that Eastwood's contrary view—that the proper stance should be one of bravery—marks him as some kind of barbarian. I suspect this is one of the reasons many people cannot bear him—although his attitudes were almost certainly shared by Gary Cooper and most of the team that made *High Noon*.

But the difference between the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

elite reactions to *High Noon* and *High Plains Drifter* is a lugubrious comment on some of the changes that came over America from 1952 to 1973. From many points of view, the stories are identical. Both the Gary Cooper character and the Clint Eastwood character look with bitter contempt on townspeople not brave enough to fight in their own defense. The Gary Cooper character throws his sheriff's star in the dust, leaves town in utter disdain—and admittedly lets it go at that. But his story, after all, has started from scratch. In the Eastwood story, there is a score to settle. A man has been beaten to death while cowards stood by, afraid to help him. The Lord is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored.

Careful readers of Norman Mailer—and who do not expect his instincts to accord with his professed politics—will not be entirely surprised to learn that he is an ardent fan of Clint Eastwood. Mailer's favorite films seem to be the Westerns that Eastwood made in the U.S. in the 70's and 80's, and the movie with which he leads his list is *High Plains Drifter*. These films, says Mailer, "come out of the old, wild, hard, dry, sad, sour redneck wisdom of small-town life in the Southwest. All of Eastwood's knowledge is in them, a sardonic, unsentimental set of values that is equal to art for it would grapple with the roots of life itself." Mailer goes even farther, quoting a speech of the Eastwood character in a later Western, *The Outlaw Josey Wales*. "When things get bad," says the character played by Eastwood, "and it looks like you're not going to make it, then you got to get mean. I mean plain plumb-dog mean, because if you lose your head then, you neither live nor win. That's just the way it is." This carries the moral to an even grimmer point than in *High Plains Drifter*. We are no longer concerned here with bravery, or the punishment of cowardice, but simple, back-to-the-wall survival. It is them or you. Live or die.

EASTWOOD was making these later Westerns alternately with his *Dirty Harry* series, police stories set in present-day San Francisco. And with each film, whether detective or Western, the Eastwood audience —irresistibly, it would seem—continued to grow and grow. The detective series and the Westerns were strongly linked morally, but it is perhaps no puzzle that the "unsentimental sense of values" Norman Mailer so admired in the mythic and even present-day small-town West he found totally inapplicable in modern San Francisco. The *Dirty Harry* series, Mailer decided, was made to "satisfy producers." (What producers? The late Louis B. Mayer? The late Darryl Zanuck? Hollywood doesn't work that way anymore. Clint Eastwood is his own producer.) For when you try to do justice and pursue criminals in a great, modern U.S. city you come up against the American Civil Liberties Union and other such groups.

It seems as if any American with even the mildest interest in public affairs must be able to recite the Miranda warning in his sleep by now (and the young probably think it was written in the Bill of Rights), but it dates from only 1966 and the famous *Miranda* decision of the Warren Court—historically a mere blink of the eye. What is not often recalled is that, even in the ultra-liberal Supreme Court of Chief Justice Earl Warren, the decision on *Miranda* was only five to four. Still, over a mere five years, from *Mapp* in 1961 through *Miranda* in 1966, the Warren Court radically altered the relationship of the police and prosecutor to the criminal suspect, and entirely to the advantage of the latter. This, at a time when the authority of family, church, and school were all declining drastically, narcotics were introducing into our society disruptions of which we are not yet able to take the full measure, and crime rates were rising alarmingly.

The Miranda warning, recited by the approaching officer at the time of arrest, assures the suspect that he has "the right to remain silent and refuse to answer questions," and "the right to consult an attorney before speaking to the police and to have an attorney present during any questioning now or in the future. . . ." Then there is the "exclusionary rule," according to which any evidence—corpses, murder weapons, whatever —gathered at variance with the strictest constitutional proprieties is "tainted" and inadmissible in court even when the police have acted in perfectly good faith, sometimes even under instructions from a judge. So people who have committed revolting crimes—which no one questions for a moment—are now walking the streets, or have been clogging the judicial system with appeals for as much as fifteen years.

The country is at this point in a ferment over the "exclusionary rule." The U.S. Congress has before it a raft of bills, including one backed by the Reagan administration, that would suspend the rule when the police have acted in "good faith." Already three states have voted good-faith bills into law and others are considering another remedy: doing away with the exclusionary rule entirely while legislating a right to sue the police for violations of the Constitution. Perhaps most important of all, public disgust with crime has reached a high level. My own feeling is that the American people, in a popular vote, with that "unsentimental sense of values" we have heard so praised, would have expunged or radically modified the exclusionary rule long ago—at least as long ago as 1971, when Clint Eastwood made the first *Dirty Harry* movie, which came close to tripling the success of any Eastwood vehicle to date. Clearly, he hit a nerve.

Kent State had been in 1970. The campuses were alive with "peace" demonstrations. Students carried the Vietcong flag, called their own country "fascist." Policemen were known as "pigs." But Clint Eastwood and director Don Siegel thought that there was another America out there. Warner Brothers, which put up the money, agreed with them. And, judging by the forty-nine states that went for Nixon in 1972 and the success of their film, they were right.

THE scene is San Francisco. "Dirty" Harry Callahan (Eastwood) is a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

police inspector known, in these immediate post-*Miranda* years, as a little hard to keep leashed. A psychopath announces that he has buried a fourteen-year-old girl alive and will let her suffocate to death unless he is paid $200,000 within hours. In a first encounter both Callahan and the psychopath, who calls himself Scorpio, are wounded, but Callahan continues in hot pursuit. Discovering that Scorpio is the groundskeeper at a football stadium, and thinking the buried girl has only minutes to live, Callahan (with no warrant) blasts through the groundskeeper's quarters and finally runs him to earth in the middle of the football field. Still thinking the girl's life is at stake and that every minute counts, he brutalizes the extortionist until Scorpio reveals where he has buried the girl. Police rush to the spot and lift her up out of the ground. She is dead. But is Scorpio charged with murder? Kidnapping? Extortion? Or any of a dozen other felonies? No, because every single piece of evidence against him is tainted. Callahan has entered his quarters without a warrant, failed to read him the Miranda warning, violated his rights under at least the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Amendments. Scorpio "walks."

Callahan predicts that Scorpio will strike again, and he does. This time he hijacks a school bus filled with terrified children and demands both ransom money and an escape plane. Against orders, Callahan goes after Scorpio on his own, leaps onto the roof of the bus from a bridge (Eastwood does his own stunts), and, finally, it is the two of them by the waters of the bay. There has been gunplay, Scorpio has attempted to hold a young boy as hostage, gun to his head, but Callahan has freed the boy, wounding Scorpio. At last, there is one of those trademark Dirty Harry moments of truth. Scorpio is about to reach for his pistol from where he lies sprawled on the dock. Callahan seems to have fired all the bullets in his .44 Magnum. "Been counting the rounds, punk?" asks Callahan icily. "Maybe I'm empty. The question is: do you feel lucky?" After an agonizing moment of hesitation, Scorpio reaches for his weapon, and Callahan blows him to kingdom come. As a last touch (another note from *High Noon*), Callahan slides his police inspector's badge out of his wallet in disgust and scales it out over the bay.

THE film caused an uproar. It is unquestionably contrived. It is juvenile. It is popular entertainment. But if the plot of the film were to be reproduced in real life, it is hard to imagine that more than 1 percent of the American population would consider Harry Callahan, fighting desperately to save a girl's life, a contemptible person, or would consider the freeing of Scorpio, whose civil rights have been violated, a triumph of justice. True, this 1 percent was well represented among those who wrote about *Dirty Harry*. Eastwood was called a brute, a fascist, and worse. But he had his defenders, too, and it was curious how those sympathetic with the film in general tended to like Eastwood's acting, while those who hated the film thought he was the worst performer who had ever stepped in front of a movie camera.

I, personally, think Eastwood is considerably underrated as an actor. He is not Robert Duvall, or Robert de Niro, or Dustin Hoffman. He operates within a narrow range. But it is no narrower than the ranges of Gary Cooper or John Wayne. Humphrey Bogart—to cite another demigod from the past—worked within an extremely narrow range. Eastwood is 6-feet-4, all bone and muscle, and it is admittedly not every man who has the looks of a Clint Eastwood. But even with these physical qualifications, it is insufficiently appreciated how difficult it is to be a convincing Dirty Harry. Precious few of Hollywood's leading men could do it. Eastwood looks right, walks right. He is never self-conscious. He uses no profuse display of mannerisms, but this makes the part harder, not easier. It seems he belongs there and that if you violated his sense of the ethical order of society, with no hysteria or loss of contact with his moral center he could calmly kill you. The ultimate test, you might say.

I do not have quite so high an opinion of Eastwood's directing. He is a competent director, perfectly adequate professionally, but his most skillfully made films have been directed by other men, such as long-time crony Don Siegel (still perhaps best known for his original version of *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*) and Michael Cimino (*The Deer Hunter*), to whom Eastwood gave his first chance to direct in *Thunderbird and Lightfoot*. In addition to Cimino and Tidyman (*The French Connection*), Eastwood has used as screenwriter such a self-declared Hollywood right-winger as the flamboyant John Milius (who went on to direct *Conan the Barbarian*). Eastwood fired director Philip Kaufman from the set of *The Outlaw Josey Wales* (1976) after one week's shooting, thereby perhaps saving that highly successful Western from the havoc which I am convinced Kaufman wreaked upon Tom Wolfe's wonderful *The Right Stuff*. But Eastwood's greatest shortcoming as a director is his casting and handling of actors. Locked within the stoic self-possession of his characters, from the Man With No Name to Dirty Harry—a self-possession that absorbs substantial psychic energy—Eastwood seems rather insensitive to other actors' performances, although he did have the acumen to team up with Robert Duvall in *Joe Kidd*.

In 1978 Eastwood walked straight into another one of his lucky flukes. *Every Which Way But Loose* was his first "bare-knuckle subculture" film, but it also had broad comic elements, with an orangutan as co-star, also Ruth Gordon. But the main cause of concern was that Warner Brothers, the distributor, was spending most of its promotion money that season on its $30-million spectacular, *Superman*, on which the studio's life depended. Malpaso and Warners devised a strategy, however. That Eastwood was king in the South and West was established. But in the cities of those regions, heavy advertising budgets had already been committed for *Superman*. The answer was to open the Eastwood film first in *small towns* in the South and West, sometimes in back-country areas. The result was the most suc-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cessful Eastwood ever. It finished the year second only to *Superman*, and ahead of *Rocky II* (which itself had bettered *Rocky I*).

Meanwhile, Eastwood has gone on intermittently with his *Dirty Harry* series, which has now reached its fourth film, *Sudden Impact*. In *Magnum Force* (1973), he attempted to disarm his liberal critics: the villains are a band of young policemen who assassinate murderers and criminals escaping punishment through the laxity of the laws. "There are things wrong with the system," says Callahan angrily, but he stops a long way short of condoning extra-legal groups exercising retribution under no authority but their own. In *The Enforcer* (1976), he attempted to placate feminist critics by having his police partner a woman (Tyne Daly), assigned to act as his "watchdog." As it happens, she is the only woman Callahan ever falls deeply in love with. Unfortunately—if conveniently—she dies.

In the opening episode of *Sudden Impact*, released in the Christmas season of 1983, Callahan is wrestling again with the exclusionary rule. He has arrested a criminal. No one questions either the man's guilt or Callahan's good faith in acquiring evidence. But there is a slip somewhere. The evidence is tainted. The judge reprimands Callahan scathingly in court. And the criminal walks. But the main action of *Sudden Impact* is about a woman who has been the victim of a gang rape, of which the perpetrators have all been found innocent through perjured testimony. The woman (Sondra Locke) sets about taking justice into her own hands, and when finally caught by Callahan, after the usual firefights with thugs and hieratic shots on misty streets, she is pityingly let go.

For the theme that hangs over all the *Dirty Harry* movies, and perhaps to a lesser extent all of Eastwood's career, is vigilante justice. It is a theme deep in American culture, literature, films, and popular fiction: a man alone in a corrupt world, the lawless West, or the jungle of cities. The sinister twist in the *Dirty Harry* series is that what has corrupted justice in our time, and made it so hard to obtain, is a kind of liberalism gone mad. Thus: Dirty Harry.

But last Christmas offered an interesting development. Throughout the nation at large, *Sudden Impact* had the strongest opening of any Eastwood film ever. In New York City, moreover, which to say the least is not Clint Eastwood country, *Sudden Impact* went off like dynamite. Eastwood, who almost never grants interviews, denies that his films are the least bit political. On the other hand, what is "political"?

In his private life, Eastwood financed the mission of Bo Gritz, a decorated Vietnam war veteran, in his recent armed attempt to recover U.S. MIA's in Laos. Perhaps Eastwood's patriotism, his belief in the legitimacy of force when necessary, and his determination to see predators punished are so deeply ingrained that he doesn't even think of them as political. Perhaps he thinks such fundamental assumptions should be beyond the realm of political debate. And the man might have a point.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Books in Review

Matters of Life & Death

IN THE LAND OF ISRAEL. By AMOS OZ. Translated by MAURIE GOLDBERG-BARTURA. *Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 257 pp. $12.95.*

Reviewed by RUTH R. WISSE

THE history of the state of Israel is (unfortunately) so dramatic that the great issues always threaten to obscure the subtleties of daily and individual life. Contemporary Israeli writers tend to resent this encroachment of the collective drama on private experience, and, in what may be deliberate defiance of their national fate, to concentrate on the ordinariness of ordinary men and women, on the personal scene.

This is particularly true of Amos Oz, one of Israel's finest writers of fiction and consistent demythologizers. In book after book, Oz has taken the great myths with which modern Israel is associated—the noble experiment of the kibbutz, the reclamation of the soil, the wars against the British and the Arabs, the phoenix-like rise of the Jewish spirit out of the ashes of the Holocaust—and shown us their underside: bruised, dazed, and straying characters who move in an atmosphere of almost unalleviated depression. Himself a member of a kibbutz and a soldier in Israel's citizen army, Oz in his fiction specializes in exposing the darker motives and disturbed dreams of those who must sustain these structures on which the country stands.

Now, in a sharp change of form, the latest book of Amos Oz to appear in English has entered vigorously into the public fray. *In the Land of Israel* is composed of ten articles and an epilogue, written between November 1982 and midwinter 1983, all but the last of which originally appeared, to a stormy reception, in the Israeli socialist newspaper *Davar*. In the aftermath of Israel's incursion into Lebanon, public debate over government policy grew even more heated than it is ordinarily in Israel. Oz, using a method of quasi-reportage, brings us some of its highlights.

Through a series of representative voices, speaking either individually or on behalf of a group, and through his own composite portraits of particular communities, Oz introduces those parts of Israeli society to which he, as a prominent man of the Left and a spokesman for the Peace Now movement, does not belong. He begins with the ultra-Orthodox Jews who now form an enclave in the Jerusalem neighborhood where he was raised, and who stand opposed to the existence of the secular state in which they prosper. He interviews young Sephardi Jews in a settlement town; founding members of new Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria; Arabs of Ramallah and East Jerusalem; a French Catholic priest; farmers of the Galilee and the coastal plain; and the citizens of Ashdod, a small city on the Mediterranean. Some of the voices are philosophical and calm; most, however, are pitched high with excitement, bitterness, anger. Though Oz faithfully presents the moods of the persons with whom he contends, he also remains firmly in control of the ideological terrain, guiding the reader's response to all that is placed before him.

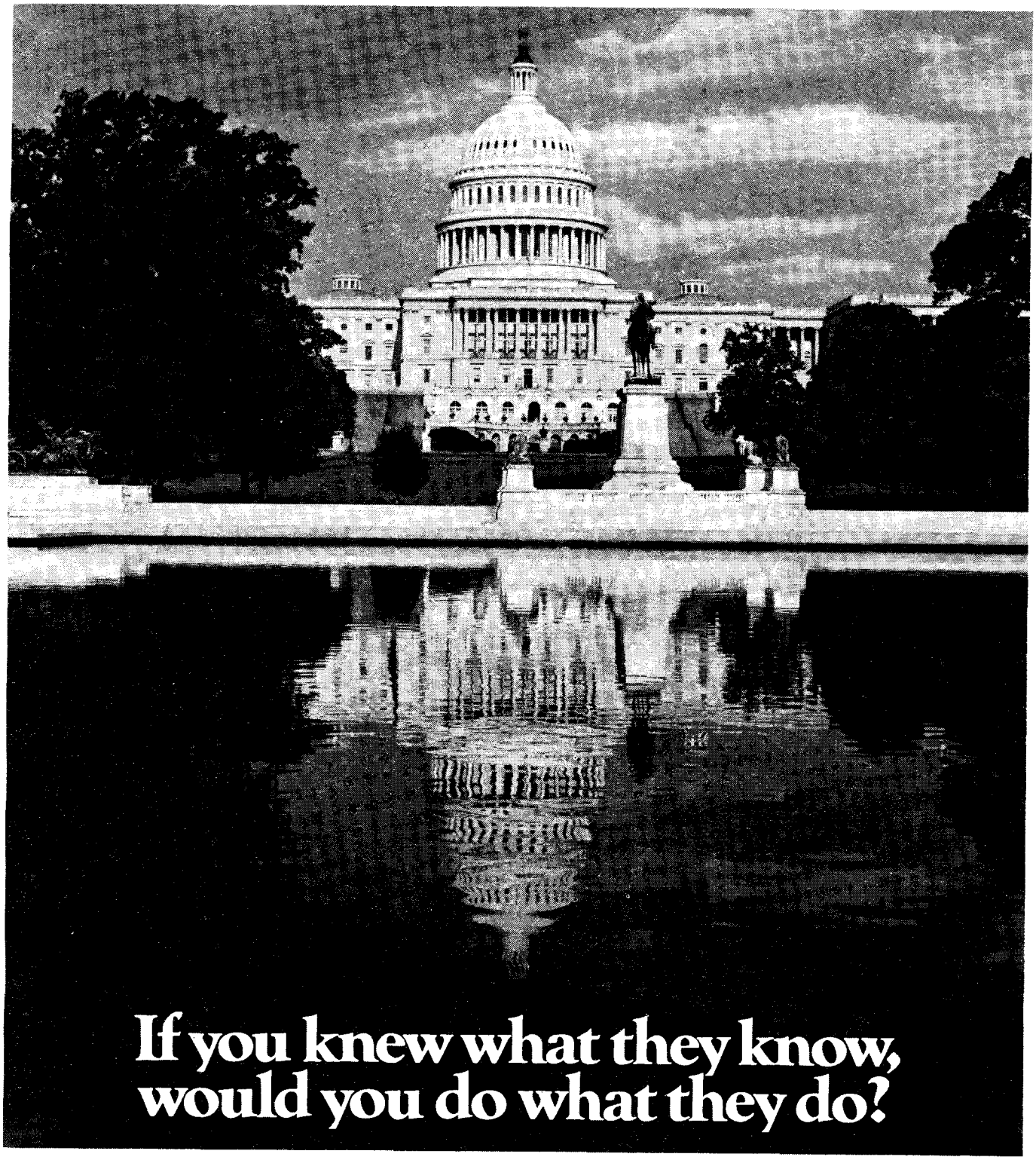
Oz's mixture of travelogue and tract results in a book of odd contradiction. Artistically, he gives very fine expression to the views of those he meets, his antagonists in particular. The book's most memorable character is a fierce member of a veteran *moshav* (a farming cooperative) who tells Oz he is willing to accept all the moral condemnation of the world (along with Oz's own accusation that he has been poisoned by Hitler) until "the thick-headed *Zhid*," his term for the cowardly Diaspora Jew, is finally forced to learn how to hold onto his piece of land and his life. Here and elsewhere the differing points of view represented in *In the Land of Israel* demand from Oz, and by and large receive, that semblance of tolerance which, according to his own stated belief, is the wholly desirable condition of Israel's spiritual pluralism.

Yet Oz's purpose is anything but a celebration of spiritual pluralism, for he fears what is happening in his country, and has written this book to undercut the "opposition." In his running commentary he tells us how we should be reacting to all that we read; whenever his own views are threatened, he warns us against the very people he is interviewing, attempting to turn the testimony of his witnesses against them. The literary result is that when the artist triumphs, and the situations or characters are allowed to speak for themselves, Oz produces some of his most robust prose to date; whenever the ideologue intrudes, in the name of the "pluralistic" spirit, Oz reveals more than he intends about his own role in fomenting the current tensions in the land of Israel.

The central controversy, as Oz defines it, is over the nature of Zionism and the meaning of Jewish destiny. Himself he presents as a non-religious anti-nationalist, as a child of the marriage of the Jewish heritage (in its secular variety) with European humanism, and as one who refuses to have his Jewish status determined for him by the religious community. Gush Emunim, the religious-nationalist "bloc of the faithful," is to him an especially dangerous element within Israel, since it purports to translate God's will into the political program of settling the territories that Israel occupied, or regained, in the war of

RUTH R. WISSE *teaches Yiddish literature at McGill University and is currently working on a book about American Yiddish writers. Her article, "Blaming Israel," appeared in our February issue.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



If you knew what they know, would you do what they do?

Here's your chance to find out what our policy makers know about this year's major foreign policy issues...and to tell them what you would do if the decisions were in your hands.

Great Decisions '84 is a lively briefing that lets you be a political insider. Published by the Foreign Policy Association, a nonpartisan educational organization, this booklet gives you unique insight into this year's most important issues. You'll learn about U.S.-Soviet relations, the nuclear arms race, the world debt crisis, and five other vital questions confronting our nation.

GREAT DECISIONS '84

Introduction

1 U.S.S.R. UNDER ANDROPOV
Hard Choices for Moscow & Washington

2 CENTRAL AMERICA, MEXICO & THE U.S.
Discord Among Neighbors

3 U.S. SECURITY & WORLD PEACE
Allies, Arms & Diplomacy

4 SOUTH AFRICA
Can U.S. Policies Influence Change?

5 INTERNATIONAL DEBT CRISIS
Borrowers, Banks & the IMF

6 SAUDI ARABIA & JORDAN
Kingdoms at the Crossroads?

7 CHINA & THE U.S.
Five Years After Normalization

8 INTERNATIONAL DRUG TRAFFIC
Can It Be Stopped?

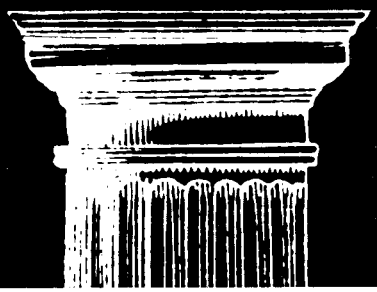
◊ **Opinion Ballots**

Foreign Policy Association

Vote by using the special opinion ballots found in each booklet, and the FPA will make sure our leaders know where you stand. To order your copy of *Great Decisions '84* now, send your check for $6.70 (includes postage and handling) payable to Foreign Policy Association, Dept. A, 205 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10016 or call 212-481-8453 for additional information.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

1984
SUMMER
SEMINARS
IN JUDAIC
STUDIES



THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE
ACADEMY FOR
JEWISH STUDIES
Offers
A VACATION WITH A PURPOSE!
Enrich your mind • Delight your eyes
Refresh your spirit

Co-Sponsored by
Skidmore College
Saratoga Springs, NY
July 8 – 13
Crisis and Change in Modern Jewish History
July 15 – 20
Modern Jewish Literature: Contrast and Continuity
July 22 – 27
Romantic Love in the Bible

Williams College
Williamstown, MA
July 8 – 13
Contemporary Jewish Ethics
July 15 – 20
Biblical Narrative

Fee of $300.00 covers room, meals and facilities.
Send coupon for additional information.

ACADEMY FOR JEWISH STUDIES
165 East 56 Street • N.Y.C. 10022

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

or call
(212) 751-4000, Ex. 442, 434

1967. Oz's sensitivity alerts him to the true appeal of Gush Emunim, with its genial and confident spokesmen who appear to have taken over from the early socialist pioneers their idealistic will to sacrifice, giving them the high ground in the moral debate. The danger, according to Oz, lies not so much in the group's political platform as in its spiritual strength, the very faith in the future that he and others like him often lack.

To counter the spokesmen of Gush Emunim, Oz enters "the argument on life and death" in his own person. In a multifaceted speech that he gave at the settlement of Ofra and which is reproduced as a chapter in this book, he pleads, hectors, explains himself, but above all apocalyptically warns his auditors that by insisting on a Greater Israel, they are dragging him and his children into endless war. Oz, however, does not speak as a practical man; he never bothers to wonder how it is that the perpetual wars began long before Gush Emunim came into being, or to show how he proposes to stop them, given that the opposition to Israel's existence is not Jewish but Arab.

THE problem grows thornier when Oz moves from Ofra to the offices of the daily paper, the *Arab Dawn*, in East Jerusalem. Here too Oz asks probing questions, but instead of warning his hosts about the consequences of their antagonism, as he did with the Jewish settlers of Ofra, he tips the rhetorical balance in their favor. He calls to mind that there once was a Zionist journal, the *Dawn*, founded in Vienna in 1868, and works hard to establish a homey parallel between the Palestinian Arabs and the Jews, "two opposing peoples . . . as similar as brothers." Operating from this premise of Arab brotherliness—itself a premise of his own "humanist" outlook—Oz recites a litany to himself throughout the interview: "Is it right to compare the two *Dawns*? Is it possible not to?" And again: "Is it right to compare? Is it possible not to?" It is almost as if, by the force of his plaintive desire, he could will an Arab-Jewish symmetry into being.

Unfortunately, Oz's Arab interlocutors turn out to be as uncooperative in this literary attempt to maneuver them into a reciprocal framework as the Arabs in general have so far proved in politics. In the text of the interview the editors of the *Arab Dawn* are recorded as uttering relatively "moderate" sentiments, but a note at the end of the book informs us that the staff later denied many of the views the author attributes to them and accused him, "an Israeli writer who stands to the Right of Center"(!), of having set them up in a clever trap. Oz attacks the religious nationalists of Gush Emunim for presuming to interpret God's will; but if his own faith depends on thus systematically misinterpreting the Arabs' will, it can hardly be said to offer a better alternative.

IN THE epilogue Oz quotes a letter from a fan who regrets that he has temporarily chosen journalism over fiction, and who urges him to keep away from current affairs for the sake of his writing career. I disagree. In this book Oz reveals remarkable skills as a portraitist. When the furies are unleashed, and the author frees his subjects from the constraint of his own disapproval, the cloud of sadness that burdens much of Oz's fiction finally lifts, and the prose turns electric. Paradoxically, this study of a bitterly divided nation is the most vivid and in some ways the brightest of all his books.

Yet Oz's artistry seems to work at odds with his convictions. He cannot muster the same verve to describe what he finds admirable in Israel as he does when it comes to naming all that he dislikes and fears. He draws closest to satisfaction in writing about Ashdod, the Mediterranean port which, "not pretending to be Paris or Zurich, or aspiring to be Jerusalem," embodies the author's social ideal. His description of it is worth quoting at length:

> A city planned by social democrats: without imperial boulevards, without monuments, without grandiose merchants' homes. A city living entirely in the present tense, a clean city, almost serene. The horns of passing cars do not squeal, the pedestrians do

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

not run. It seems that almost everybody here knows almost everybody. If there is poverty here it is not glaring. Even the wealth of the suburb of villas near the beach is not ostentatious. A city of workers and businessmen and artisans and housewives. Of the sixty or seventy thousand souls here, about half are immigrants from North Africa, approximately one-third come from Western Europe and the Americas, and the remainder are native-born. At this morning hour, a weekday serenity rests on Ashdod: the men at work, some of the women at work, some at home. The children have gone off to day-care centers or to school. You will find no Light unto the Nations here, but also no ghetto or slum—only a small, bright port city rapidly growing and expanding to the south and east.

The prominence of negatives in his paragraph is not merely a grammatical feature, it is a key to what ıttracts Oz to Ashdod: the absence ɔf compelling history and ideological overlay, the very things that Israel has to the bursting point. One can sympathize with this ideal ɔf plainness, with the secularist's ıeed to find his own version of the Sabbath spirit in the weekday, but :hese pleasant generalities do not ;ucceed in capturing our imagina-ion as readers, as evidently they 'ail to capture the writer's. If we ook for the center of energy and :onviction in Oz's book, we simply lo not find it where he would like t to be.

Revisionism Up-to-Date

THE ALLIANCE. By RICHARD J. BARNET. *Simon & Schuster. 511 pp. $19.95.*

Reviewed by STEVEN C. MUNSON

RICHARD J. BARNET is a founder and co-director of the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, D.C.; a frequent contributor o the New York *Times* and the *Vew Yorker*; and the author of nine ›ooks, including *The Economy of Death* (about the "militarization"

STEVEN C. MUNSON *is deputy director of the Committee for the Free World.*

New . . .

Lead Pencil

Stories and Sketches by Berl Botwinik

Translated from the Yiddish by Philip J. Klukoff

Botwinik, a prolific author of essays, plays, novels, stories, was a popular Yiddish writer in New York in the 1920s and 1930s. The twenty stories collected in this volume recreate the Jewish immigrant experience, portraying the emotional, intellectual, and cultural conflict in a world and time that are no longer.

164 pages, ISBN 0-8143-1745-6, $12.95

The Great Circle

American Writers and the Orient

By Beongcheon Yu

In this ambitious and learned volume, Yu explores the influence of the Indian, Chinese, and Japanese traditions on American letters. Authors considered are Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman, Adams, LaFarge, Lowell, Fenollosa, Hearn, Babbitt, O'Neill, Eliot, Pound, Salinger, Kerouac, Snyder.

268 pages, ISBN 0-8143-1737-5, $22.95

wayne

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS
The Leonard N. Simons Building
Detroit, Michigan 48202

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NEW PERSPECTIVES ON
THE HOLOCAUST, BRANDEIS, AND THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE.

Against the Apocalypse

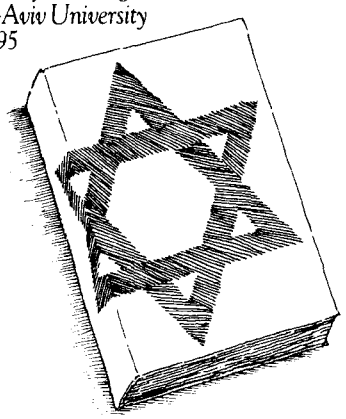
Responses to Catastrophe in Modern Jewish Culture
DAVID G. ROSKIES
The Holocaust has been viewed as an apocalyptic event, standing outside history, without analogy or precedent. Challenging this view, Roskies places the Holocaust, and the literary responses of victims and survivors, in the context of generations of Jewish response to persecutions, pogroms, communal catastrophe.
"A brilliant study... factual, evocative, and heart-rending."
—John Murray Cuddihy
$20.00 Illustrated

Louis D. Brandeis

Justice for the People
PHILIPPA STRUM
Using newly available archival material, Strum has written a fascinating full-length biography of this remarkable Supreme Court judge and social reformer.
"A truly distinguished work... I expect it will take its place as the major work on Brandeis for years to come."
—James MacGregor Burns
576 pp.
$27.50 Illustrated

Now in Paperback
A Palestinian State

The Implications for Israel
MARK A. HELLER
Center for Strategic Studies, Tel-Aviv University
$6.95



At bookstores or from
HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge, MA 02138

of America), *The Roots of War* (illuminatingly subtitled "The Men and Institutions Behind U.S. Foreign Policy"), *Global Reach* (about the power of multinational corporations), *The Giants* (about the United States and the Soviet Union), and *Real Security* (about the uselessness of military power). His new book, *The Alliance*, is a history of America's relations with Western Europe and Japan since 1945.

The Alliance begins with an account of the rebuilding of Germany in the aftermath of World War II, and ends with an account of the rising tide of fear in Germany and the rest of Western Europe that the United States is about to start (a nuclear) World War III. In between, Barnet describes the creation of the Atlantic alliance and its slow disintegration over the last thirty years.

The alliance was in disarray, according to Barnet, from the day the NATO treaty was signed. NATO's declared purpose was to prevent a Soviet invasion of Western Europe. Yet at the time, he argues, no one in authority actually believed such an attack was likely. NATO's real purposes were, rather, political: to stimulate the recovery of Western Europe; to encourage European integration; to provide an adequate defense against internal subversion; to force the Soviets to negotiate the reunification of a free and capitalist Germany. But in order to drum up domestic support for the alliance, Western politicians found it necessary to create a war scare and a mythical Soviet threat.

For the United States, the alliance served as the main expression of what Barnet calls American "hegemony" over the Western capitalist democracies. The perpetuation of the alliance thus quickly became an end in itself—so much so that in 1952 the United States refused Stalin's offer to negotiate the reunification of a neutral and democratic Germany. According to Barnet, the United States was afraid that such a deal would encourage neutralism, dilute American influence in Europe, and imperil the unity of the West.

In fact, writes Barnet, the bonds of unity were already weakening. Despite their professed interest in resisting the spread of Communism, the allies were unable to mount a concerted military effort to save French Indochina in 1954. Similarly, when two years later Britain and France (and Israel) invaded Egypt after Nasser had nationalized the Suez Canal, the United States humiliated them by forcing their withdrawal.

WHILE the partners were finding that their alliance counted for little beyond the boundaries of Europe, they were also having trouble devising a plausible military strategy. In the 1950's, reliance on American nuclear weapons for the defense of Western Europe had become politically necessary: the cost of "maintaining conventional forces big enough to be a credible deterrent to the Soviet attack no one quite believed was coming" was too high. But by the late 1950's, the Soviet Union had acquired intermediate-range nuclear weapons. Since a nuclear exchange would thus have meant the annihilation of Western Europe, NATO's military strategy was hopeless almost from the start.

The danger of nuclear war was made frighteningly real by the Cuban missile crisis in 1962. Although the outcome of the crisis was considered a great triumph for the West, in fact, according to Barnet, America's handling of the crisis backfired. By humiliating the Soviet Union, the Kennedy administration pushed it into a massive nuclear-weapons build-up to challenge American superiority. And by dramatizing how much European security depended upon the United States, the administration inspired the French to build up their own nuclear deterrent and to begin the process that would lead, several years later, to their withdrawal from the formal structure of NATO.

The United States proved equally short-sighted with its deepening involvement in the war in Vietnam. The Johnson administration tried to enlist allied support for the war effort, but France had denounced American involvement from the beginning, and as the war dragged on, becoming increasingly unpopular in Western Europe, the United

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

States could hardly restrain the other allies from following suit. By the late 1960's, when Vietnam had spawned a worldwide student protest movement against the entire system of liberal, capitalist, democratic values the alliance had been founded to defend, association with the United States—the protest movement's primary target—had become a political liability for the governments of Western Europe.

YET while relations between the United States and Western Europe grew increasingly strained, relations between the allies and the Soviet Union were steadily improving. Between the two superpowers, says Barnet, a de-facto détente had been in existence since the Cuban missile crisis; it was officially inaugurated in 1972 with a flurry of agreements including, most notably, the SALT I accord. But the new relationship soon began to crumble when Congress insisted on making most-favored-nation status and the extension of credit contingent upon freer emigration for Soviet Jews. The Nixon administration had also made the mistake of selling détente domestically by arguing that it would cause the Soviet Union to modify its strategy and behavior. The Russians, however, according to Barnet, had never pretended that this would be the outcome of détente; they continued to arm revolutionary Marxist movements and to build up their nuclear arsenal. American hardliners soon seized on these Soviet activities as evidence that détente had failed. So successful were they in fomenting a political backlash that in 1980 President Jimmy Carter (who had once decried America's "inordinate fear of Communism") felt compelled for domestic political reasons to impose sanctions on the Soviet Union in response to its invasion of Afghanistan.

Having suspended nearly all major aspects of détente, the United States urged its allies to do the same. For them, however, and especially for Germany, détente had been a success. It had put an end to the unnatural isolation of Western Europe from Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. And improved relations with the Eastern bloc, in addition to bringing economic benefits, had given the allies a cherished new political independence from the United States. They had no intention of sacrificing détente to help the Carter administration outflank its right-wing critics.

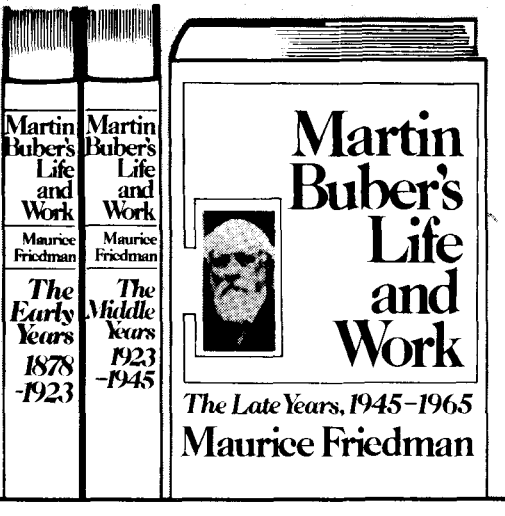
If the allies thought the Carter administration's reaction to Afghanistan was reckless, they have found the Reagan administration's attitude toward the Soviet Union far worse. Reagan himself had long echoed the "primitive nationalism and bloodcurdling militarism" of "the extreme right-wing in America," and the men he brought with him into office "all had a taste for confrontation and some seemed to want a war." They began by issuing a "call to do battle with the 'Russian threat' by killing peasants in El Salvador." The request appalled the allies, who favored a political settlement "with the very forces whose extermination the United States was now underwriting." Even more alarming was the American decision to embark on a massive build-up of nuclear weapons and delay arms-control negotiations with the Soviet Union. From Reagan's rhetoric and policies, only one conclusion, for millions of Europeans, can be drawn: the *real* threat to the safety of Western Europe comes from the United States.

AS FOR the Soviet Union, in Barnet's view it has always been a "defensive" power vis-à-vis the Western democracies. Thus, he suggests, the coup it staged in Czechoslovakia in 1948 was a defensive reaction to the political success of the Marshall Plan; the Berlin blockade was a defensive reaction to America's plan to build and arm West Germany; postwar threats to invade Western Europe were always meant to deter a nuclear attack on the Soviet Union by the United States; and, more recently, the invasion of Afghanistan was a defensive step taken to shore up a faltering Communist ally, and posed no danger

"An extraordinary testament to the man and his work."*

"The definitive biography....This moving, remarkably alive biography is as vigorous and as deep as its subject."—*Publishers Weekly**

"The most extensive, thorough, systematic, and readable interpretation of the life and work of Buber that we are likely ever to get."
—*The Antioch Review*



Published this month:
The Late Years
$32.50 480 pages, illustrated
Available:
The Early Years, 1878-1923 $29.95
The Middle Years, 1923-1945 $29.95

DUTTON
2 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to Western interests in the Persian Gulf.

It is clearly his view of the Soviet Union that leads Barnet to depict the Western alliance as little more than a giant fraud—a military alliance, costing hundreds of millions of dollars, mobilizing hundreds of thousands of troops, formed to deter an adversary that poses no real threat. NATO was created merely to serve temporary political and economic interests; now that those interests no longer exist and the fraud has been exposed, it follows that the alliance cannot, and should not, survive.

LIKE the standard revisionist version of the cold war which this book updates, Barnet's history of the Western alliance rests on several false arguments. The first is that in the immediate postwar years no danger existed of Soviet aggression in Western Europe. That this danger was in fact very real was made plain by the behavior of the Soviet Union at the time: by its subversion of a democratic Czechoslovakia, its fomenting of a Communist insurrection in Greece, its encroachments on Turkey, and its attempts to frighten the Western allies into relinquishing control of a free West Berlin. It was these acts of aggression, designed to extend the domination of the Soviet Union even beyond the conquests it had already made in Eastern Europe, that led to the creation of NATO, a truly defensive alliance whose purpose was to prevent just such an outcome. It has served that purpose now for thirty-five years.

Secondly, in order to blame the failure of détente on the United States, Barnet focuses on the issue of American motives and Soviet perceptions. But regardless of motives and perceptions, the United States and the Soviet Union signed a statement of principles initiating détente; in pursuing its aggressive policies, the Soviet Union has consistently violated those principles. The list of countries that have fallen under Soviet political and/or military domination in the era of détente now includes Vietnam, Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique, South Yemen, Afghanistan, Nicaragua. Moreover, these countries are not merely Soviet clients or outposts for the projection of Soviet power; they are also places afflicted by the horrors of life under Soviet-style rule. In most cases that life has been imposed, not by means of an "invasion" of Soviet troops, but through Soviet-supported terrorism, subversion, and revolution.

It is, finally, his indifference to the consequences of a life under Soviet rule that leaves Barnet undisturbed by the possibility that the Soviet threat to Western Europe might take some form other than outright invasion; that the formidable military power of the Soviet Union might, in the absence of the American "protectorate" which (he claims) Europeans today find so irksome, be used to intimidate Western Europe into becoming a *Soviet* protectorate, with all that such a development would imply for the future of European democracy.

Quite apart from bringing about the demise of democracy in Western Europe, the dissolution of the alliance would put an end to America's role as a world power. Richard Barnet makes no bones about the pleasure with which he views this latter prospect; his disingenuous history of the alliance is an attempt to make it appear inevitable.

Artists and Dealers

TRACKING THE MARVELOUS: A LIFE IN THE NEW YORK ART WORLD. By JOHN BERNARD MYERS. *Random House. 285 pp. $17.95.*

Reviewed by JEAN FRUMKIN

IT IS only now, after almost forty years, that we are beginning to look with fresh eyes at that period in American cultural life when the Parisian Surrealists, practically en masse—Matta, Yves Tanguy, Max Ernst, Marcel Duchamp, Joan Miró, André Breton—were in New York. It was a pivotal moment: when the Surrealists arrived they found (to quote one of them) that "the Americans were painting Post Office murals out of books." When they left, Surrealism's intuitive methods had contributed to Action Painting and Abstract Expressionism, and the way was prepared for New York to take over and dominate the art world and the world art market for the next several decades.

Perhaps the first important remembrance of the period (but one which received scant notice) was the art dealer Julien Levy's *Memoir of an Art Gallery,* which appeared in 1977. Levy, who as a young man had known most of the artists and writers of the French avant-garde in the 20's (and all of the Surrealists later) opened a gallery in New York in 1930; he was the first to organize an exhibition of Surrealism in America and was, along with Pierre Matisse, a leading supporter of the movement. When Levy closed his gallery in 1948, it marked the end to that wild and exciting exchange between the Parisians in self-exile and the American painters on whom they had a crucial impact—Arshile Gorky, Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning, William Baziotes, Mark Rothko, Adolph Gottlieb, Robert Motherwell, Philip Guston, and many others.

Now a second memoir of that period has appeared, by the dealer John Bernard Myers who came to New York from Buffalo in 1944 to work on the avant-garde magazine *View* and who ended up becoming an art-world "personality." He was the creative force behind the Tibor de Nagy gallery which opened shortly after Julien Levy closed his doors and which became the center for the young painters of second-generation Abstract Expressionism; later he ran a gallery of his own, becoming a kind of *éminence grise* in the art world.

Coming soon will be a third memoir of the period, written by the critic Lionel Abel. To judge from its working title, *The Intellectual Follies: 1929–1979,* and from the excerpts that have so far appeared,* Abel's book will cover the full period encompassed by both Julien Levy and John Bernard Myers.

JEAN FRUMKIN, *a new contributor, writes regularly for a British quarterly,* Art Book Review.

* See especially "The Surrealists in New York," COMMENTARY, October 1981 and "Scenes from the Cedar Bar," COMMENTARY, December 1982.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Franco Maria Ricci brings to America the most beautiful magazine in the world

Beautiful and Bold

In May of 1984, the most talked-about magazine in Europe will begin publishing an international edition in America. Daring and unexpected, beautiful and bold, FMR *will be the first magazine of its kind to join together the twin spirits of American achievement and Italian artistry.*

Directed by Franco Maria Ricci, Italy's leading art publisher and graphic designer, FMR *bears his initials on the cover as his pledge to make it the most striking magazine of the eighties.*

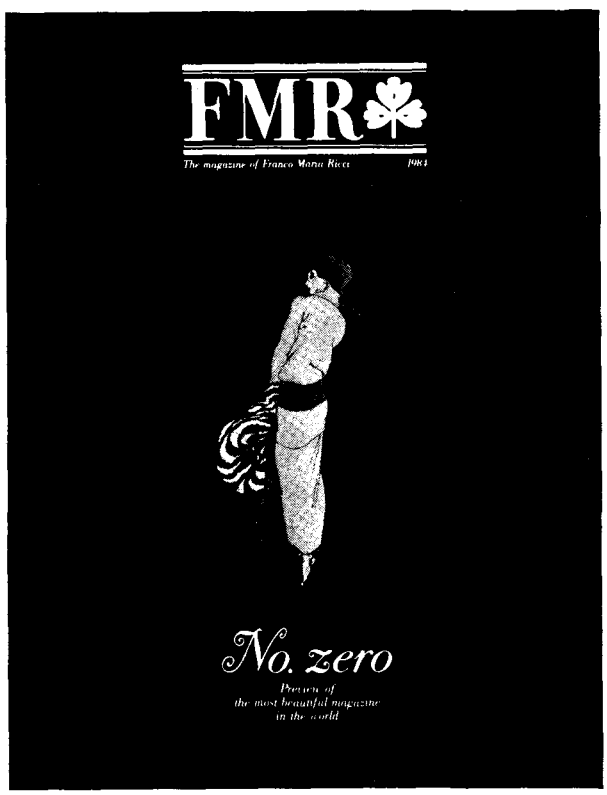
Its 160 pages, all in full color, will bring you art you have never seen before from all over the world: visionary gardens, Baroque palaces, Renaissance frescoes, kabalas, medieval bestiaries, Puritan gravestones, sirens, Madonnas, hippogriffs, unicorns, forgotten sanctuaries, Towers of Babel, fashion and vanities, Art Deco deliriums. These stunning images will be enriched by the literary flair of the world's outstanding writers and the knowledge of its leading scholars.

FMR

This page has been sponsored by

MONTEDISON

in support of the arts and Italian culture



COMM2

FMR

P.O. Box 30108, Lansing Michigan 48909

☐ **Free "Zero Issue":** I enclose $ 1.25 for handling and postage

1984 subscription (8 issues) and membership

☐ FIRST SUBSCRIPTION, personal or gift (please circle) $ 48.00

☐ ___ ADDITIONAL GIFT SUBSCRIPTIONS:
$ 40.00 each (list attached) $

☐ ___ POSTAGE (outside U.S., Canada, and Europe)
$ 10.00 each $

Sign gift card: _____ Total $

☐ I enclose a check or money order

Charge my ☐ Am. Express ☐ Diner's Club ☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa

Acct. no. _____ Exp. Date ____

Interbank no. (Mastercard only) _____

Signature _____

Name (or recipient) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone (____) _____

Charter subscriber benefits

FMR *was created for an élite group of subscribers, who will become members of the Ricci Collector's Club. The card entitles them to a 20 percent discount on all Ricci publications and the gift of a beautiful silk-bound address book (a $ 35.00 value), printed on hand-made Fabriano paper and designed by Franco Maria Ricci for his friends and collectors.*

FMR *is printed in Italy and to maintain its high quality will be limited in number. We cannot guarantee charter subscriptions after April 30.*

What is the "Zero Issue?"

A special 32-page preview of the most beautiful magazine in the world has been prepared – with the same extraordinary illustrations and design. You can receive this "Zero Issue" of FMR *by sending the attached coupon and $ 1.25 to cover postage and handling.*

Send coupon to: FMR
P.O. Box 30108
Lansing, Michigan 48909
or charge your subscription by credit card, calling toll-free:
1-800-FMR-CLUB
In Michigan call collect:
(517) 323-9200

(The "Zero Issue" cannot be ordered by telephone.)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Lionel Abel is a professional critic, and Julien Levy published a book on Surrealism and one on Breton before writing his memoirs. John Bernard Myers, in this his first book, is the compleat amateur: *Tracking the Marvelous* contains as many syntactical faults as it does anecdotes. Moreover, while some of Myers's stories are recounted at first hand, others seem to have been harvested by the handful at dinner parties. Myers did go everywhere and he did know everyone, but as a narrator he is, as Gertrude Stein might have said, dependable if you have corroboration, but if not, not.

HERE, for example, is the account given in *Tracking the Marvelous* of the painter Matta's reaction to his first experience of fatherhood:

> *Journal, March 1946*
>
> If anyone were to ask me which painter in New York is most talked about I would say it is Matta. . . . The incident that caused the most gossip is the fact (and it is true) that when he heard his wife had given birth to identical male twins, Matta instantly developed two black eyes and looked as if he had been socked in a boxing match. He was so "struck" by this experience that he packed his bag and abandoned his family. Edouard Roditi says it is the first case of an authentic stigmata since the blessed Saint Teresa of Lisieux ("a bourgeois saint, my dear") received hers.

And here is the same incident as told by Julien Levy in *Memoir of an Art Gallery*:

> I went out to Southampton for the inauguration of Caresse's [Crosby] venture, and found Matta there as a sort of artist-in-residence. He had a black patch over one eye; the other eye was inflamed, too, and seemed infected. . . . He was separating from Parquarito because she was subjecting him to the indignity of becoming a father. "I take it as a form of castration," he said, "I consider fatherhood an indignity to my testicles, and that is why I am losing one of my eyes, because I have displaced from the lower balls to the eyeballs." "Why is your second eye also infected?" I asked.
>
> "Sympathetic," he answered.
>
> It soon turned out that Parquarito gave birth to twins—two unidentical boys.

Julien Levy's account, strange as it sounds, makes perfect sense in terms of Matta's surrealist "morphological" logic. The story as related by Myers is obviously something he is just repeating, inaccurate in every detail, including the point about whether the twins were identical or not.

Still, there are plenty of charming anecdotes in *Tracking the Marvelous*. If one is of a certain turn of mind one will enjoy hearing how Charles Henri Ford, the editor of *View*, wrote a poem entitled "Flag of Ecstasy" in homage to Duchamp, who was living in New York above a beauty parlor, and ended it with the now almost lost pun, ". . . Marcel, wave. . . ." Or how Myers one day asked Duchamp how many people he thought were actually interested in avant-garde art, to which Duchamp answered promptly, "Maybe ten in New York and one or two in New Jersey." André Breton comes off as a "snob and anti-homosexual" who would not learn to speak English for fear it would corrupt the perfection of his written French. And so on and so forth. The book also includes some sincerely remembered experiences, such as a visit to Joseph Cornell in the house on Utopia Parkway in Queens, described in sweetly unadorned prose.

Art dealer, professional puppeteer, publisher, entrepreneur, Myers believes that an art community must be interactive, and during his career there was scarcely a moment when he was not out there cross-pollinating the avant-garde. He himself, in truth, is a strange mix of naiveté and shrewdness, and there is a streak of disingenuousness that runs through this book. One wonders, for example, about the chapters tacked on at the end that deal with Mark Rothko's suicide and the bitter court battle which followed when the executors of his estate and the Marlborough gallery were sued by his children for reaping excessive profits from the sale of Rothko's paintings. When these chapters first appeared separately in the *New Criterion* they were widely discussed in the New York art world where it was assumed they were central to the book. Now that the book is here, however, they prove to be a kind of coda, and they seem—to this reader at least—a kind of soft-sell apologia for persons who were tried and found guilty under due process of law. (The executors were removed and damages in the millions were assessed against them and the Marlborough gallery.) Although Myers telegraphs his "disinterestedness," one questions why these chapters are here at all.

BOOKS of memoirs, no matter how sloppily written, have an intrinsic value: they supply bits and pieces of the larger puzzle and help us to refine our overall judgment of a period. Two of the important figures in this particular story were Matta and Arshile Gorky, and much still remains to be clarified about the roles they played. Gorky, who had cancer, had had his neck broken in a car accident in which Julien Levy was driving and as a further result of the accident, Gorky's painting arm became numb; a fire had damaged his studio and important work had been lost; his wife Magooch, who could no longer handle Gorky's periods of deep depression and drinking, had involved herself with Matta.

Of Gorky's subsequent suicide Myers writes, "The horror of the suicide was heightened because he [Gorky] made telephone call after telephone call asking many fellow artists to come and talk with him. They all claimed to be busy because they had become bored with Gorky's cries of pain." In fact, there was a communal sense of guilt about that suicide. Many people in the New York art world walked away from it, while others, looking for a scapegoat, found one conveniently outside their community, in the Surrealist Matta. Julien Levy, who knew Gorky well, understood that the causes of the tragedy were many and complex: "Gorky died of many disappointments," he wrote.

Possibly this sense of guilt with-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in the New York art community is one reason why it has taken so long for memoirs of the period to begin to be published. Now that John Bernard Myers's *Tracking the Marvelous* has appeared, perhaps others (in addition to Lionel Abel) will come forward as well.

How Are We Doing?

AMERICA'S HIDDEN SUCCESS: A REASSESSMENT OF TWENTY YEARS OF PUBLIC POLICY. By JOHN E. SCHWARZ. *Norton. 208 pp. $12.95.*

Reviewed by NELSON W. POLSBY

ON A day-to-day basis, bad news is what makes the headlines. I have no idea whether gloom and doom actually sell newspapers or magazines, but there it is. Do we get a bumper harvest? Farmers threatened with ruin. Inexpensive electronic gadgets available? That throws U.S. workers out of work. People living longer? Incidence of cancer on the rise. It seems that every silver lining comes accompanied by a big black cloud.

The constant exposure of American readers to bad news sooner or later saps the adrenalin, and at least some of us begin to refuse to believe the message even when it is true. Others remain eternally credulous. In a democratic republic, where citizens have real responsibilities, both reactions can be deeply unfortunate. Citizens' expectations matter, and what we think about public policies and how we evaluate their effectiveness matter too.

What we need in order to think competently about public affairs is a little less panic and a little more perspective, a chance to remind ourselves of fundamental facts that influence the way we live and the policies we pursue. The best and most serious public discussions provide that sort of perspective. A good example is *America's Hidden Success* by John E. Schwarz, an able and broad-gauged political scientist from the University of Arizona.

I am especially pleased that a fellow political scientist has written this book. On the whole, it is difficult to convince most people of the social usefulness of political scientists. People have their own ideas about politics on which they pride themselves, and from their standpoint there is very little need for criticism, more information, or so-called professional analysis from so-called professionals. By supplying an unwanted service our profession gets a bad name, and it is no wonder that when one or more of our colleagues breaks into the big time or the limelight, we get to read about them in more socially acceptable disguises: "historian" Henry Kissinger, "historian" Doris Kearns, "urbanologist" Daniel Patrick Moynihan.

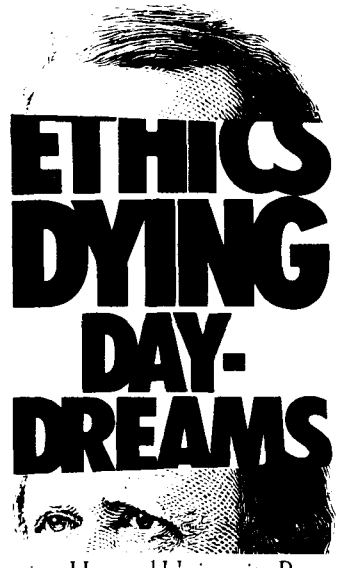
Strangely enough, the very lack of a strong demand for what political scientists do better than most people constitutes an argument in favor of the contributions they occasionally make to public discussion. When they are operating at their best, political scientists can bring the canons of objectivity and dispassion to sharply contested topics, can seek out and present relevant evidence, and can sometimes help to move public policy-making toward sounder premises of action.

America's Hidden Success attempts a careful assessment of the contribution of federal programs in the post-Eisenhower era (1960–80) to the overall welfare of the nation. Debate on this subject, as we all know, is hot and heavy. Partisanship and ax-grinding are so prevalent that it is difficult for those of us who are relatively uninformed about the underlying data to get our bearings. One would think that under ordinary civil rules of discourse, participants in debate ought to be entitled to their own opinions but not to their own facts. Increasingly, however, debates in the national arena over all sorts of public policy—from arms control

NELSON W. POLSBY *is professor of political science at the University of California, Berkeley. His latest book is* Political Innovation in America: The Politics of Policy Initiation.

CHOICE AND CONSEQUENCE
PERSPECTIVES OF AN ERRANT ECONOMIST
THOMAS C. SCHELLING

With an ingenious, often startling approach, this sophisticated political economist brings new perspectives to some of the most troubling and fascinating topics of our time.



"The Schelling Phenomenon – that wondrous mixture of intellectual nimbleness, the driest sense of humor, ability to shift instantly from abstract thought to perfect illustration from everyday life, *and* well-hidden, yet deep moral concern – is with us on every page."
– Albert O. Hirschman

$20.00 At bookstores or from Harvard University Press Cambridge, MA 02138

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"AN EARLY OLYMPICS? Soviet archaeologists have unearthed the world's oldest ski, which they place as four thousand years old. Probably used in an unsuccessful escape attempt."

For a free copy of the current issue of National Review write to Dept. C-3. 150 East 35th Street. New York, N.Y. 10016.

Le Moal

942 Third Avenue
(Between 56 & 57 St.)
New York, N.Y. 10022 / MU 8 8860

"Besides being an excellent collection, this book helps balance the American reader's image of Israeli poetry."—*Library Journal*
"He presents poems of spiritual and erotic beauty, filled with surrealistic imagery and elemental imagery . . . . Carmi evokes the unearthly in the commonplace."
—*Publishers Weekly*

At the Stone of Losses
by T. Carmi
Translated from the Hebrew by Grace Schulman
$13.95 hardcover, $8.95 paperback
At bookstores
University of California Press
Berkeley 94720

to affirmative action—do not obey ordinary civil rules of discourse.

In the case of the range of public policies that Schwarz considers —medical care, housing, welfare, employment, health, environmental protection, economic growth— discourse has been especially unedifying. From the Right we have had blanket condemnations of governmental action on grounds of fraud, waste, and abuse. Government, it is said, doesn't solve problems: it *is* the problem. Debaters on the Left have trashed governmental action on the grounds that it is feeble, ineffective, not enough. Both sides accuse the government of repressiveness. Ideologues on both sides have thus had reasons to avoid a serious look at evidence. Both sides have vested interests in emphasizing failure, and in preventing public discussion from focusing on what might be learned from successes, if any.

Fortunately, not all discussions of these issues have consisted of sheer static. Schwarz draws eclectically from studies written by serious students from all across the spectrum, as well as from official statistical sources, in putting together his case for the proposition that there are in fact successes in the overall picture:

> The politics of the post-Eisenhower years, "the failed policies of the past," provided unprecedented numbers of new jobs for Americans, raised the nation's real income at rates of growth favorable [compared] to those of the past, reduced poverty significantly, assured that Americans would not grow more widely separated in the proportions of income they received, and in those many ways helped the nation adjust to the challenge of the crowded generation. And all these results were achieved without the alleged wild or uncontrolled expansion of the public sector.

It is nevertheless the case, as Schwarz argues, that public-sector activities did play a significant part in achieving many of these results —notably the reduction of poverty. He says that the expansion of the economy in general did not reduce poverty among Americans during the 1960's and 70's as much as governmental programs did. He offers a plausible explanation for this finding: a lot of American poverty is structural, built into the lives of people who are unable to participate in general economic prosperity because they are too old to work, or too young, or too sick, or trapped by fundamentally uncorrectable circumstances in bad jobs. For these millions of people, governmental programs worked far better— Schwarz says five or six times better —than economic expansion in reducing poverty.

IT IS interesting to me that Schwarz does not mention politics very much in this book, and he scores no particular partisan points. The accomplishments he discusses occurred during the "post-Eisenhower" era, a period in which Democrats occupied the White House for twelve years and Republicans for eight. I believe Schwarz's tactical judgment in not assigning praise or blame to any particular set of politicians is sound. The sources of public policy are extremely complex, and it is a bad habit— which Schwarz does not have—to attribute to a particular President the causation of all sorts of events simply because they occur during his Presidency.

Instead, Schwarz focuses on such causes as the creation during the late 1940's and 1950's of what soon enough became a "crowded generation" of new entrants into the work force, a problem that no other industrialized nation faced:

> In the fifteen years following 1965, the immense growth in the numbers of workers—29 million— amounted to more than half the entire labor force of Japan, or, indeed, surpassed the total labor force of France or West Germany.

Thus the real story of the American post-1960 era, as Schwarz tells it, was that the American economy grew and absorbed a great many of the "crowded generation" into the productive work force. Although unemployment did rise, so did employment, and sharply. And although this rise did not directly benefit the structurally poor, it did help produce tax revenues that financed the reduction in poverty.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

There are some useful reminders in all this. As we compare the United States with other political and economic systems, we sometimes forget what a difference size makes. Our problems are bigger than those of most nations because we are bigger. We are trying, and in the main succeeding, at operating the largest democratic politico-economic system—open, competitive, varied—known to history. Part of our openness lies in our readiness to listen to self-criticism. Part of our variety lies in the fact that some people are genuinely disadvantaged and deserve help. And a significant conclusion is that many of these people have gotten the help they needed. Schwarz puts some of this into the sort of context that seems to me well suited to the improvement of public discussion and the improvement also of the minds of his readers.

"Wet Affairs"

THE PLOT TO KILL THE POPE. By PAUL HENZE. *Scribners. 216 pp. $14.95.*

THE TIME OF THE ASSASSINS: ANATOMY OF AN INVESTIGATION. By CLAIRE STERLING. *Holt, Rinehart & Winston. 264 pp. $14.95.*

Reviewed by ROGER KAPLAN

THESE two very interesting books on the attempted assassination of John Paul II in May 1981 both reach the same conclusion: Mehmet Ali Agca, the youthful Turk who missed killing the Polish Pope by a finger, was piloted by the Bulgarian secret service (the DS, for *darzhavna sigurnost*). Since the latter, according to experts in this field, is thoroughly subservient to the Soviet KGB, there is every reason to believe that Yuri Andropov, the man then in charge of that organization, was the person ultimately responsible for what would have been one of the century's great murders.

The two authors' approaches to their subject are quite different. Paul Henze, a scholar whose distinguished governmental career included important posts in Turkey and a term on the National Security Council staff of Zbigniew Brzezinski, describes in turn the atmosphere of uncontrollable terrorism in the Turkey of the 1970's that made an Agca possible; the Soviet state's traditional reliance on terror at home and abroad as an instrument of policy; and the motives the Soviets might have had for wanting Karol Wojtyla, Pope John Paul II, dead.

Claire Sterling, though an investigative reporter rather than an expert, has become one of the most knowledgeable sources on international terrorism; her purpose in *The Time of the Assassins* is to demonstrate how this phenomenon threatens the Western democracies. In her previous book, *The Terror Network*, Mrs. Sterling showed the interconnecting links among the many terrorist bands, in Italy (where she lives) and elsewhere, and that these links were manipulated not locally but in Moscow. Her conclusion, considered rather novel at the time even though intelligence professionals had been calling attention to it for years, was that revolutionary states, the Soviet Union foremost among them, are perfectly capable of making use of terrorists whose own allegiances are to other, even to adversary, causes—so long as the actions for which they are used "objectively" serve the interests of the pilots. Of Mehmet Agca himself, Mrs. Sterling writes:

> Ideologically, he declared himself to be on neither side, and both. "I make no distinction between fascist and Communist terrorists," he said. "My terrorism is not red or black; it is red *and* black." He styled himself an "international terrorist" pure and simple, the prototype of a new breed emerging after a decade of planetwide terrorist warfare.

This thesis was not especially well liked when Mrs. Sterling first published it in the *Reader's Digest*,

ROGER KAPLAN *writes frequently about European politics and culture.*

On April 16th, Make This Passover Celebration Especially Meaningful With

A PASSOVER HAGGADAH,

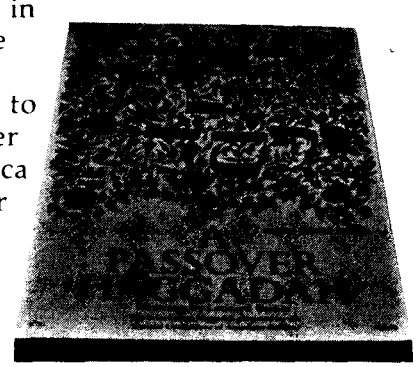
The Modern Classic Marking Its Tenth Year of Publication

- Edited by Rabbi Herbert Bronstein.
- Twenty full-page watercolor illustrations by Leonard Baskin.
- Complete with transliterations of ancient blessings.
- Non-sexist language throughout the text.
- Interpretive readings and meditations from prophetic, rabbinic, and modern sources.
- Fully-annotated collection of festival songs.

With nearly 400,000 copies in print, *A Passover Haggadah* is the contemporary Haggadah that offers supplementary readings to suit the individual Seder. Order today at your Sisterhood Judaica shop, local Jewish bookstore or Call: **Central Conference of American Rabbis,**

(212) 684-4990

21 East 40th Street
New York, NY 10016



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for it seemed axiomatic (as it still does to many) that terrorists must be on one side or the other, and would not do something so irrational as to serve each other's cause. Much of the early discussion of the attempt against John Paul therefore focused on which side Agca could be determined to have come from (neither side claimed him). As Mrs. Sterling writes:

> Not many could judge a case like Agca's dispassionately. One side had him ticketed and labeled as a rightist, the other as a secret agent of the leftists. The thought that he might have been both would scarcely cross their minds.

Terrorism in Soviet eyes is an instrument of war against liberal, or bourgeois, democracy, to be used or rejected on the basis of strictly pragmatic considerations. This is not an easy notion for citizens of liberal democracies to accept; it is much easier to suppose that terrorists are bred by factors purely local, awful injustices that exist in Turkey or El Salvador or the West Bank or, at the limit, Italy or Germany. And indeed local factors there may be. But it is a fact, to cite only the Turkish case, that when the generals took charge of a country on the brink of disintegration in September 1980, they rounded up 43,000 terrorists who had been supplied with over 800,000 weapons of foreign origin, which were being used to commit a political murder every hour. "Though there is a great deal yet to be learned about terrorism in Turkey," writes Paul Henze, "we already know enough to justify two basic conclusions":

> Terrorism was fomented on a massive scale by the Soviet Union utilizing surrogates such as Bulgaria and Syria as principal channels for arms and Palestinians as major "subcontractors" for training; and the Soviet *modus operandi* included multifaceted infiltration and build-up of rightist groups to serve as a foil for the Left and accelerate the destabilization process.

Agca himself was widely believed to have been a member, or at least a fellow-traveler, of the "Grey Wolves," an extreme Right organization which took part in the terrorist onslaught of the 70's. Henze and Mrs. Sterling both establish convincingly that the Grey Wolves, or Idealists (the name is apt), had connections to the "Turkish mafia," a criminal enterprise that prospered during Turkey's desperate years. This mafia, in turn, worked closely with the Bulgarian DS, particularly when it came to trading drugs for guns. The interest of the Bulgarians lay in the fact that the spread of crime further weakened the Turkish state which they and their Soviet masters were intent on undermining. In addition, however, the criminal organization's reach, extending to the Turkish guest-workers in Western Europe, was useful to the Bulgarians when they organized assassinations, or "wet affairs" (as the relevant secret-service department is nicknamed), far from home.

The connection between violent, totalitarian revolutionaries and common criminals has been popularized and to some degree trivialized by trashy novels, but it is a well-established phenomenon, one that Dostoevsky and Conrad understood well. If the Soviets wanted to kill the Pope, it would be plausible for them to make use of non-Soviet agents whenever possible; and why not nonideological criminals? Henze quotes Ladislav Bittman, a Czech agent who defected in 1968:

> The activities of the satellite intelligence services are usually underestimated by the West, but these offshoots from the Soviet apparatus play an important role in the Soviet overall scheme. . . .

Hence the Bulgarians, who are specialists in "wet affairs" and, as it happens, the only subjects of the Soviet empire who seem satisfied, even enthusiastic, about their satellite status. Taking Bittman's point one step further, one can posit Soviet use of criminal organizations at any number of levels. Agca was an "international terrorist, pure and simple" who was trained and aided by common criminals and Bulgarian secret agents; ultimately it was up to the Soviets to decide how to make use of him.

So far, no smoking gun—except Agca's—has been found in the plot against John Paul II. This has led some observers to question the "Bulgarian-connection" thesis advanced by Henze and Mrs. Sterling. It is quite possible that their thesis would not hold up in an American court; whether it holds up in an Italian court will be seen when Judge Itario Martella decides to return an indictment against Agca's alleged Bulgarian accomplices. Rules of evidence in international politics differ from those in a court of law, however. A better explanation than this one has not yet been advanced.

If Agca was under DS, and ultimately KGB, control, it has to be established that the Soviets feared John Paul II enough to desire his physical elimination. Henze convincingly argues that Wojtyla was the most dangerous Pope ever faced by Soviet rulers. The Polish Catholic Church has been the major center in the Eastern bloc not only of spiritual but also of intellectual and ultimately political resistance to the Communists. In fact, when Wojtyla, known for his strong anti-Communism, became John Paul II in October 1978, "his selection was initially welcomed by some Communists in Warsaw because it removed him from the Polish scene." Yet a year after his historic eight-day visit to his homeland—"nothing like it had ever been seen in any country before"—Solidarity was triumphant, the first free trade union ever recognized by a Communist regime.

It is at the very least plausible that the Soviets calculated that the elimination of John Paul II would solve their Polish problem. With Cardinal Wyszinski, the leader of Polish Catholicism, on his death bed, the Soviets must have realized they had an opportunity to decapitate the Polish church, closely allied in their view (as indeed it was) with Solidarity. The Soviet media went on an extremely violent campaign against John Paul II, calling him an enemy of the Soviet state and a Nazi collaborator. To be sure, the Soviets do not assassinate everyone whom their media vituperate, but it is worth bearing in mind, as

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

STUDIES on WAR and PEACE from TRANSACTION BOOKS

NATIONAL SECURITY IN THE 1980s

FROM WEAKNESS TO STRENGTH

W. Scott Thompson, editor

"Those who want to know the thinking of Ronald Reagan's advisers should pay close attention to this recent, quickly-published [book]. Most of the authors are on his foreign and defense policy team."—Andrew J. Pierre, *Foreign Affairs*

An Institute for Contemporary Studies book
ISBN: 0-87855-412-2 (cloth) **$19.95**
ISBN: 0-917616-38-3 (paper) **524 pp. $8.95**

ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT AGREEMENTS

United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency
Introduction by Dan E. Caldwell

Arms control is a central and continuing concern of governments and an integral aspect of foreign policy and national security. In the past, it was the generally accepted assumption that more armed strength equalled greater security; but this is no longer assumed to be entirely the case, given the continuing arms race between the United States and the Soviet Union.

ISBN: 0-87855-948-5 (paper) **310 pp. $9.95**

THE SOVIET VIEW OF U.S. STRATEGIC DOCTRINE

IMPLICATIONS FOR DECISION MAKING

Jonathan Samuel Lockwood
Preface by Leon Gouré

Soviet perceptions of American strategic doctrine have influenced their use of military power in foreign policy. This comprehensive work discusses the implications of this perception for arms control and disarmament.

A National Strategy Information Center book
ISBN: 0-87855-467-X (cloth) **175 pp. $19.95**

THE POLITICS OF DEFENSE CONTRACTING: THE IRON TRIANGLE

Gordon Adams

This is the first systematic study of the relationship between government and defense contractors, examining in detail the political impact of the eight most powerful defense contractors.

A Council on Economic Priorities book
ISBN: 0-87855-457-2 (cloth) **$39.95**
ISBN: 0-87871-012-4 (paper) **465 pp. $15.00**

NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES AND CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

B. Thomas Trout and James E. Harf, editors

This carefully rendered sourcebook of original contributions forms a basic statement on the substance of national security.

ISBN: 0-87855-900-0 (paper) **320 pp. $12.95**

OUR CHANGING GEOPOLITICAL PREMISES

Thomas P. Rona

"A challenging book that addresses major policy issues. Its major theme . . . deserves advocating as the basis for leadership in our foreign and defense policies."—Congressman Robin L. Beard, House Armed Services Committee

A National Strategy Information Center book
ISBN: 0-87855-897-7 (paper) **360 pp. $9.95**

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY

PERSPECTIVES AND DEVELOPMENTS

Joseph Haberer, editor

This volume presents an extensive, comparative analysis of science policy, planning, organization, and management in industrial and developing nations.

A Policy Studies Organization book
ISBN: 0-669-01374-9 (cloth) **240 pp. $22.95**

THE INFORMATION SOCIETY AS POST-INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY

Yoneji Masuda

In Japan a $65-billion computer usage and development plan is under way—a plan that could radically alter Japanese society and perhaps the entire Western world.

A World Future Society book
ISBN: 0-930242-15-7 (paper) **178 pp. $12.50**

NATIONAL ECONOMIC SECURITY

PERCEPTIONS, THREATS, AND POLICIES

Frans A.M. Alting von Geusau and Jacques Pelkmans, editors

Economic security has become the most prominent aspect of national security in many countries.

A John F. Kennedy Institute book
ISBN: 0-87855-946-9 (paper) **253 pp. $9.95**

Order from your bookstore or prepaid from:
Transaction Books, Department WP 2 , Rutgers—The State University, New Brunswick, N.J. 08903

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Henze reminds us, that in their view he was not merely a dangerous foreign leader but an internal enemy who had emigrated, like Trotsky and Krivitsky in their time. Moreover, after the attempt on his life, the Soviet media went to ludicrous lengths to try to establish that it was an *American* plot (in which Henze himself was supposedly implicated). They could, of course, simply have been milking a propaganda opportunity for what it was worth, but the energy with which they pursued this theme, after the manner in which they had assailed Wojtyla, seemed a little excessive.

IF there are good general reasons for pointing a finger at the Soviets, what reasons exist for suggesting that Agca himself was under their control? In the violent atmosphere, bordering on civil war, that he grew up in (he was only twenty-three when he fired a Browning at John Paul II), he came into contact with individuals traced (by Claire Sterling) to the Bulgarian DS. Whether they were leftists or rightists hardly matters, and it certainly did not matter to Agca. This, indeed, is exactly how his controls would have wanted him. The more twisted or obscure his motivations, the harder he would be to trace back to them. However, the Italian police found evidence that Agca, when in Rome, was in close contact with Bulgarians possessing all the characteristics of DS agents. And Mrs. Sterling demonstrates, in what amounts to a fascinating, albeit at times a little confusing, detective story, that the Turks he was in contact with during his financially well-oiled peregrinations through Europe were working for the Bulgarian import-export firm that is one of the DS's most useful fronts.

Who is Mehmet Ali Agca? He came from a poor family, did well at school, and made it to university. He achieved notoriety for murdering, or for taking part in the murder of, Abdi Ipekci, Turkey's most widely respected newspaper editor. He was sentenced to death for this crime, *in absentia*: he escaped, or more precisely was sprung, from a maximum-security prison while awaiting trial.

To some, Agca must have been more useful outside than in. Although they denied it, the Grey Wolves were given the credit for the Ipekci murder. In fact, if any faction benefited from the death of Ipekci, who was pro-Western, it was the extreme Left. It is not implausible that one of the Left's violent gangs made use of one of the "international terrorists, neither red nor black," that the desperate years had spawned, and then got him out of jail in order to make use of him again some day—especially now that his "fascist" reputation was fairly well-established. (If he had stayed too long in jail, he could be expected to lose confidence in his associates, whoever they were. This is precisely what seems to have happened to Agca in his Italian prison.)

When the plot was hatched against John Paul II, someone, according to Claire Sterling and Paul Henze, must have pointed out that the perfect gunman was available and in DS safekeeping (Agca was in Bulgaria after his escape). Why, indeed, not shoot the Pope with a "fascist"? And a "Muslim fanatic" to boot?

Actually, Agca's Muslim fanaticism, though proclaimed by himself, has turned out to be rather shallow. He had no history of interest in religion, and during his jaunt across Europe he partook of the distinctly secular pleasures of drinking and whoring. The fascist label, however, stuck more effectively. Against the leader of Christendom, an ultra-nationalist fascist crazy Turk—this somehow made sense.

AND this he may well have been, and be still. We do not know, and perhaps he does not either. However, what incenses both authors (Mrs. Sterling especially, who devotes half her book to it) has been the reluctance of many government officials and journalists in the West to give any credit to the hypothesis that the Soviets might be capable of making use of such a man. The conclusion that would have to be drawn—that the Soviet Union is a revolutionary state and can be expected to behave like one—is, apparently, too awful. In the end, this may be the most important lesson to be drawn from this most spectacular of "wet affairs."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Kosher wine needn't be sweet just special

And special means Kedem. From world-renowned vineyards in France, Italy, California and New York. Rated and recommended by leading wine critics and editors, Kedem wines are superior to the world's great wines for one special reason, they're kosher.

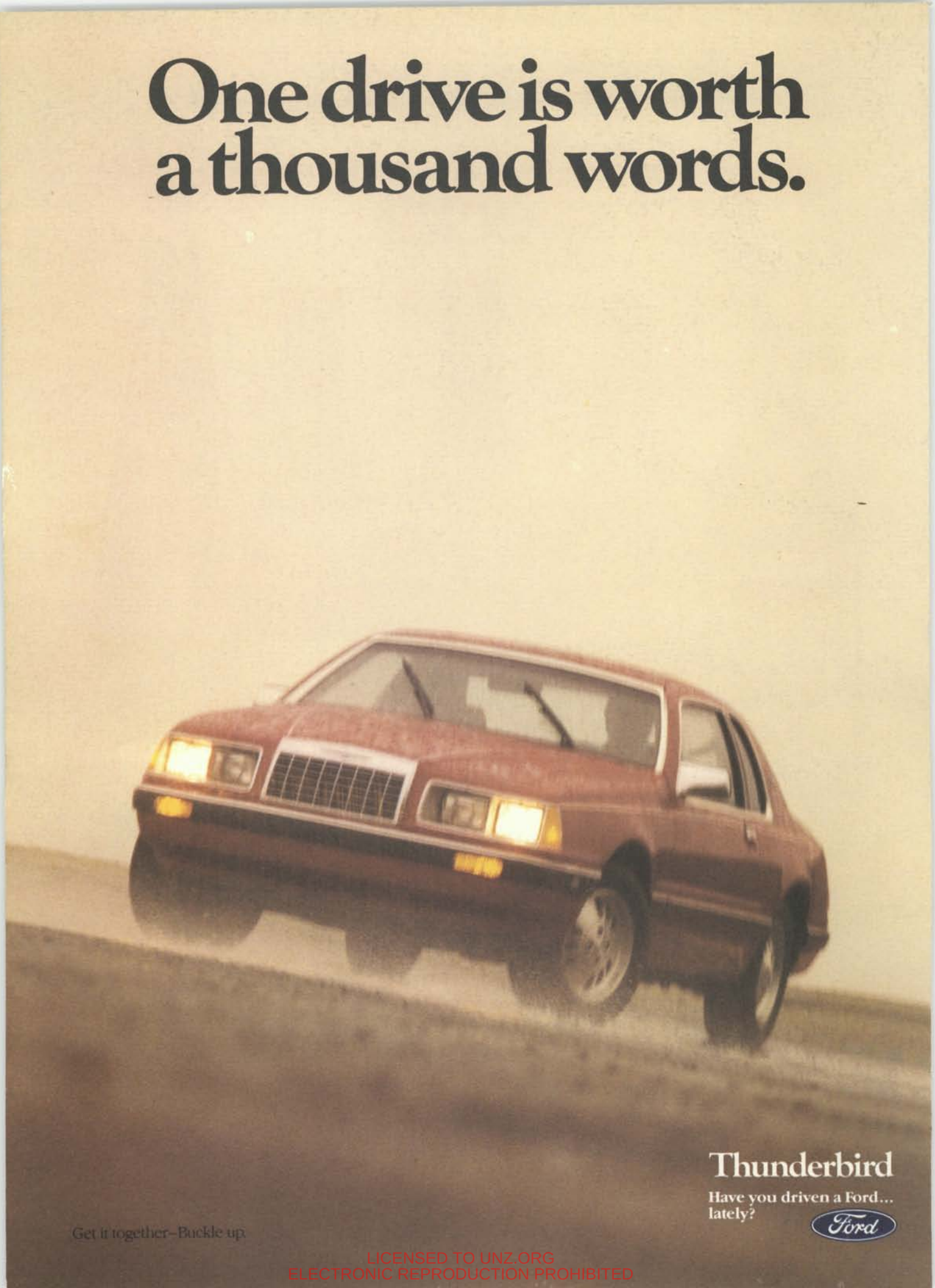
KEDEM®

KOSHER PASSOVER WINES

KEDEM WINE CO., NEW YORK, N.Y.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

One drive is worth a thousand words.



Thunderbird

Have you driven a Ford... lately?

Ford

Get it together–Buckle up.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED